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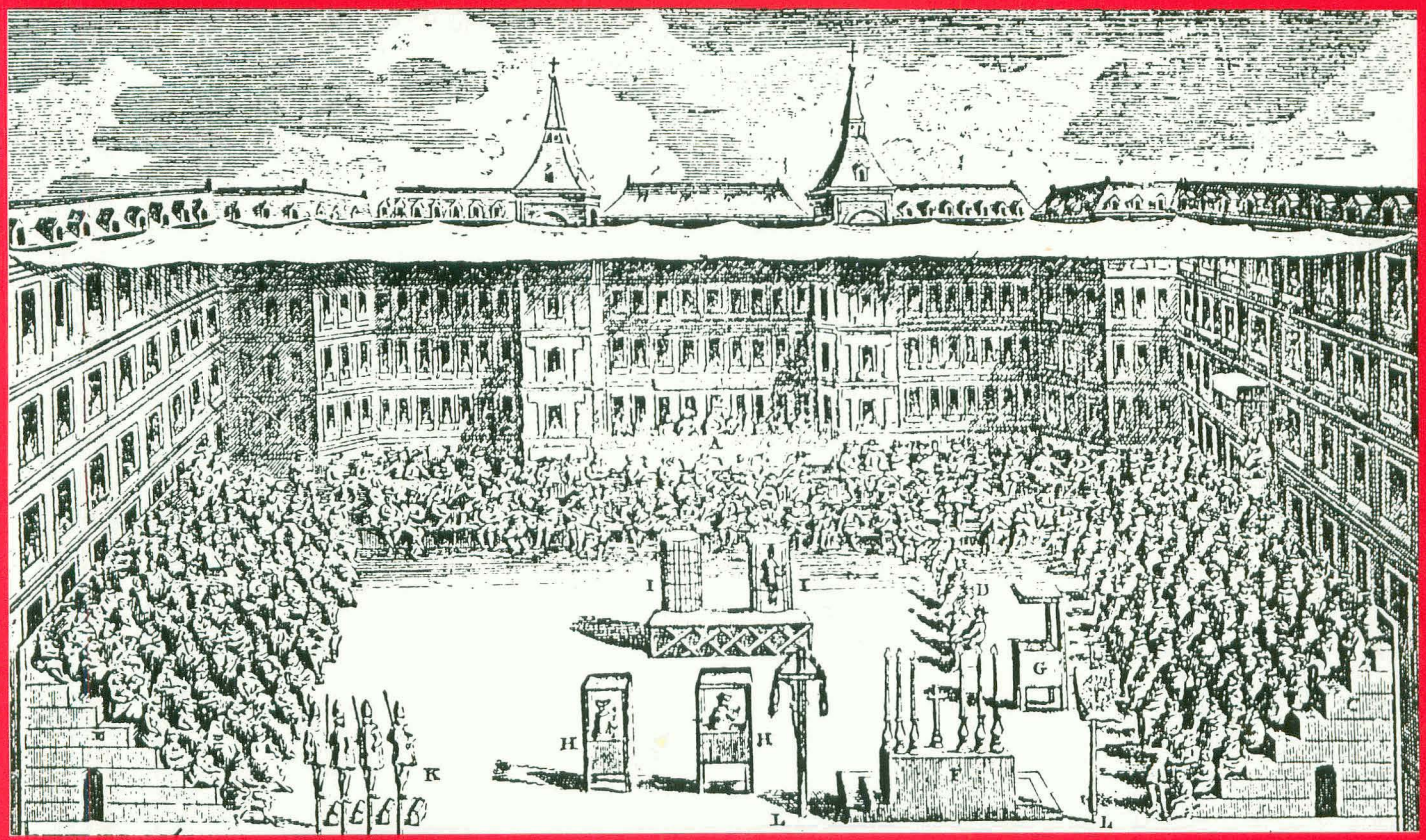

— Special Review Essay —

The Spanish Inquisition and the 'Jewish Question'

Brian Chalmers

The Weber-Shermer Holocaust Debate: A Report

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Donald Neff

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The Zionist Terror Network

Background & Operations of the Jewish Defense League and Other Criminal Zionist Groups

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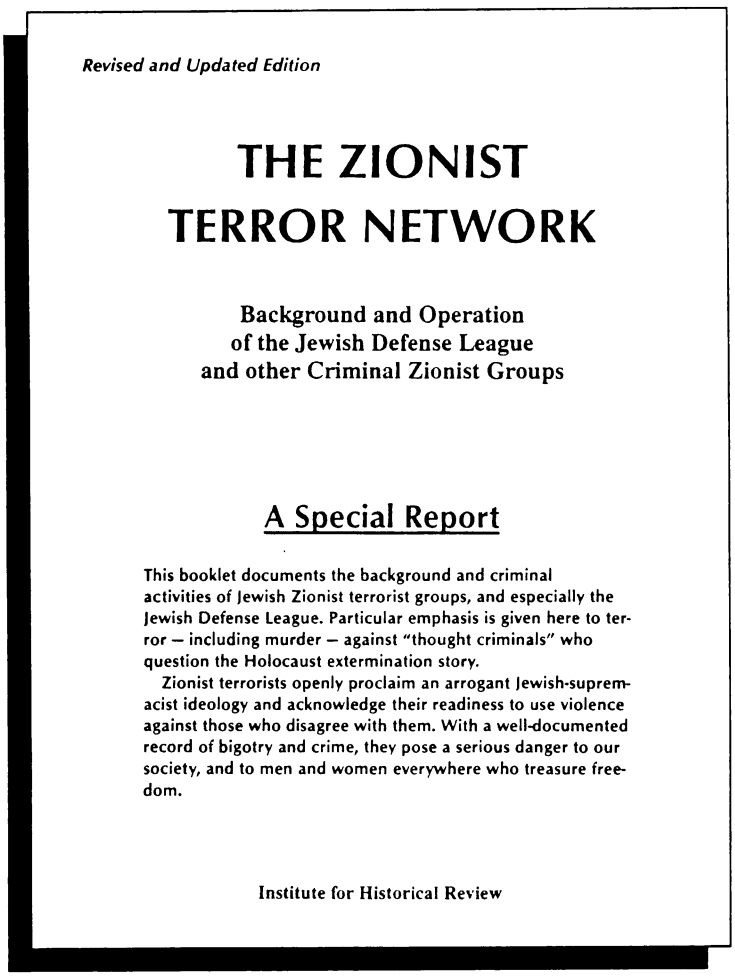
Revised and Updated Edition
THE ZIONIST
TERROR NETWORK
Background and Operation
of the Jewish Defense League
and other Criminal Zionist Groups
A Special Report
This booklet documents the background and criminal activities of Jewish Zionist terrorist groups, and especially the Jewish Defense League. Particular emphasis is given here to terror – including murder – against "thought criminals" who question the Holocaust extermination story.
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The Zionist Terror Network

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Post Office Box 2739 • Newport Beach, California 92659

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Associate Editor: Greg Raven

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Review Essay

The 'Jewish Question' in 15th and 16th Century Spain

Historian Sustains Spanish Inquisition Myths

The Origins of the Inquisition in Fifteenth Century Spain, by Benzion Netanyahu. New York: Random House, 1995. Hardcover. 1390 pages. Illustrations. Source notes. Bibliography. Index. $50.

Reviewed by Brian Chalmers

It is nearly impossible to dig into any chapter of Jewish history without uncovering lessons for our own age. Spain during the 15th and 16th centuries is a particularly striking example. Even today, our view of this period, and particularly of the Spanish Inquisition, colors our attitudes regarding relations between Jews and non-Jews. The Inquisition is considered one of Jewish history's darkest chapters — and one of Christian history's most shameful.

In 1391 intense, pent up anti-Jewish sentiment in Christian Spain erupted with great violence against the country's prosperous, well-established Jewish community. Spanish cities were engulfed in ferocious pogroms that destroyed much property and claimed many lives.

Thus began a century of conflict between Jews and non-Jews that culminated in the mass expulsion of all Jews from Spain in 1492. (Ten years later, the Muslims were likewise driven out.) In their edict of expulsion, issued on March 31, 1492, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella announced their "decision to banish all Jews of both sexes forever from the precincts of Our realm." Ordered, on pain of death, to leave within four months, the Jews were permitted to take their personal belongings, except for gold, silver, coined money, or jewels. Estimates of the number of Jews banished generally range from about 165,000 to 400,000. An estimated 50,000 Jews chose baptism to avoid expulsion. In his diary Christopher Columbus noted: "In the same month in which Their Majesties issued the edict that all Jews should be driven out of the kingdom and its territories, in the same month they gave me the order to undertake with sufficient men my expedition of discovery to the Indies."

Expulsions of Jews and outbreaks of anti-Jewish violence have been features of both European and non-Western societies over many centuries and under a variety of political and religious regimes. What is noteworthy about these 14th- and 15th-century actions in Spain, however, is that tens of thousands of Jews escaped death or expulsion by converting to Christianity. As a result, by the middle of the 15th century there was a numerically large (perhaps 100,000), and politically and economically significant community of people of Jewish descent in Spain who were, at least outwardly, Christians.

Establishing the Inquisition in Spain

Beginning with a furious anti-Jewish uprising in Toledo in 1449, the hostility of Spain's common people came to be directed against these baptized Jews, who were known as "New Christians," *Conversos*, or, contemptuously, *Marranos* ("pigs"). This new hostility developed in large part because the vast majority of these New Christians were, in the words of Jewish historian Cecil Roth, "Jews in all but name, and Christians in nothing but form,"[1] and in part because the Conversos, freed from the legal constraints against "open" Jews, rapidly ascended to the highest ranks of Spanish society and represented a competitive threat to all but the highest levels of "Old (non-Jewish) Christian" society.

In *A History of the Marranos*, Cecil Roth sums up the central problem. "In race, in belief, and largely in practice," the Conversos "remained as they had been before the conversion." These New Christians, Roth continues,[2]

> were Christians only in name; observing, in public, a minimum of the new faith while maintaining, in private, a maximum of the old one ... Baptism had done little more than to convert a considerable proportion of the Jews from infidels outside the Church to heretics inside it ... The populace, whose feelings thus became more and more inflamed, could not be expected to appreciate the theological subtleties of the matter. In the Marranos it could see only hypocritical Jews, who had lost none of their unpopular characteristics, fighting their way into the highest positions of the state.

Another Jewish historian, Howard Fast, has

Brian Chalmers is the pen name of a Roman Catholic priest who teaches at a major East coast university.

similarly noted:[3]

> The nut of the matter is that most of the converted Jews remained Jews; they accepted baptism, they assumed the trappings of Christianity; and in the seclusion of their families, their homes, and their hearts, most of them did a thing that was then called "Judaizing" ... And not only did they Judaize, but in the feeling of power and security these Marranos had gained, they helped the Jews who had remained Jews, prevented a great deal of persecution, and gained favors for the Jews.

After decades of continuing anti-Converso disturbances, Ferdinand and Isabella, acting with papal approval, established the Spanish Inquisition in 1480. Its task was to combat religious heresy and root out crypto-Jews and crypto-Muslims among the "New Christians." "The introduction of the Inquisition," reports *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, "was largely fostered by the civil power as a means of checking the Jews, whose numbers, wealth and frequent intrigues with the Moors were causing alarm."[4]

Soon this highly centralized authority was carrying out its work under Tomás de Torquemada, the able and energetic Grand Inquisitor who elevated the *auto da fé*, the "act of faith," and the rite of purification by burning alive, into a spectacle at once horrifying and fascinating.

The vast majority of those brought before the Inquisition during its first 20 years of activity were Conversos accused of heresy (secret Judaizing). With the passage of time, this agency grew into a powerful institution for protecting Catholicism and the established order in Spain. (It was abolished in the early 19th century.) It played a major role in successfully persuading Ferdinand and Isabella to expel the remaining unconverted Jews in 1492 on the grounds that they were continuing to interact with the Conversos, and were proselytizing among their former co-religionists.

It should be emphasized that the grim reputation of the Spanish Inquisition is largely undeserved. Its cruelty and arbitrariness have been greatly exaggerated over the centuries, largely as a result of anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish propaganda. The Spanish Inquisition invoked torture and the death penalty only very sparingly, and actually treated heretics more leniently than did other European countries during this period.[5]

Crypto-Jews

Nearly all chroniclers of this chapter of history have agreed that the Christianity of most Conversos was not sincere, and that they secretly remained Jews. In fact, as these and other scholars of Jewish

King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella of Spain. Their marriage in 1469 united the provinces of Castile and Aragon. In 1492 their armies took Granada, the last Muslim stronghold in Spain, and unified the country. That same year "their Catholic majesties" banished the Jews from the kingdom. Similarly, the Muslims were driven out or forcibly baptized in 1502. In the decades that followed, Spain amassed great wealth and a vast empire. By the late 1500s it was the world's foremost military and colonial power.

history have pointed out, a common Jewish response to persecution has always been "crypto-Judaism," that is, outwardly adhering to the prevailing social-religious mores and values, while secretly maintaining loyalty to the Jewish nation-religion.

Crypto-Judaism was a phenomenon as early as the fifth century BC, during a Zoroastrian persecution in Persia, and it occurred sporadically in Muslim societies (including Muslim Spain under the Almohades in the 12th century) as well as in Christian societies (including Christian Spain under the Visigoths in the seventh century).[6] In this century it occurred on a wide scale in Russia during the final decades of Soviet rule.[7]

There is abundant evidence to show that in

Public debates between Christian and Jewish scholars were held throughout the Middle Ages. This contemporary illustration shows a 16th-century "disputation" between rabbis and priests. The Jews are wearing the obligatory distinctive hats.

Spain after 1391, New Christians practiced elaborate deceptions to secretly continue their observance of many of the 613 required Jewish rituals and commandments, including circumcision, Sabbath observance, and burial rites.[8] Converso parents first told children of their special status around the age of puberty, and Conversos routinely intermarried with other New Christians. For its part, Inquisition investigators developed a long list of practices by which crypto-Jews could be recognized. These included perfunctory participation in Christian rites and performance of Jewish religious rituals.

An important indication that the New Christians remained secret Jews is the fact that many of these Conversos and their descendants openly practiced Judaism after leaving the Iberian peninsula.[9] Groups of emigrating New Christians established openly Jewish communities in Amsterdam, Hamburg, Bordeaux, Livorno and many other places, and New Christians in Brazil immediately emerged as Jews after the temporary Dutch conquest (1632-1654). Converso families had extensive kinship and mercantile ties with Sephardic (Iberian-Mediterranean origin) Jewish families around the world. Some of these New Christian families secretly preserved their original Jewish names for many generations, and re-adopted them after escaping the reach of the Inquisition.

Vestiges of crypto-Judaism can still be found in Spain, and crypto-Jews never disappeared entirely from Spanish America.[10] Even today there is a group of "Hispanic Catholics" in contemporary New Mexico who continue to marry among themselves and preserve several remnants of Jewish religious practices.[11] Well into the 20th century there persisted on Majorca an intermarrying group of descendants of Jews who were recognized as such by the other inhabitants of the island.[12]

New Christians also proved to be very tenacious in neighboring Portugal. The great majority of them descended from Jews who had been expelled from Spain in 1492 after refusing to convert to Christianity.[13] Though the last secret synagogue was discovered in Lisbon in 1706, communities of crypto-Jews continued to be discovered in the 18th and 19th centuries, and persisted even into the late 20th century.[14]

In addition, some of those who escaped the Inquisition lived as crypto-Jews in France beginning in the 15th century and in England in the 16th century, at a time when Jews were officially banned. Some crypto-Jews remained in France even after the edict of expulsion of 1615, although in the 17th century there were complaints that Jews were trading among the French "with no distinguishing marks."[15] Portuguese Marranos living in France changed their pose of Christianity only at the turn of the 18th century.

Some returned to England in the latter part of the 16th century posing as Calvinist refugees; they were expelled in 1609 after an internal quarrel alerted the authorities to their existence. But they gradually returned, this time posing as Catholics, and only removed their disguise after the conclusion of official negotiations under Oliver Cromwell. In Italy, crypto-Jews who were refugees from the Iberian peninsula were also targets of inquisitorial suspicion if they failed to adopt a Jewish identity after arriving there.[16]

Sincere Christians?

Among Jewish scholars, deep emotional involvement is seldom far from the surface. Thus, a common reaction of Jewish historians to the phenomenon of Iberian crypto-Judaism has been to accept its reality and portray it in very positive terms. In the preface to the first edition of his work, *A History of the Marranos*, Jewish scholar Cecil Roth wrote admiringly of the "incredible romance" of the story of these secret Jews, referring to "the

submerged life which blossomed out at intervals into such exotic flowers; the unique devotion which could transmit the ancestral ideals unsullied, from generation to generation, despite the Inquisition and its horrors."[17]

However, other Jewish historians — including Henry Kamen,[18] Ellis Rivkin,[19] and now, most notably, Benzion Netanyahu — have been troubled by the fact that the generally accepted view of this chapter of history implies that the New Christians were in fact cunning deceivers and hypocrites, and that their behavior thus provides a certain moral justification for the Inquisition. After all, nearly everyone during this period — Christians as well as Jews — regarded heresy as a serious crime worthy of severe punishment. Consequently, and regardless of how strange and even odious such sentiments may seem to the modern mind, the Inquisition was certainly acting within the moral and theological premises of the age.

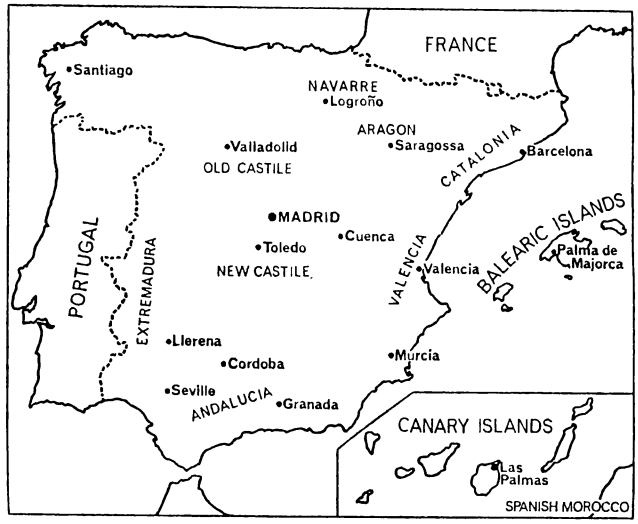
It is this moral dimension that most concerns Netanyahu. In this massive (1385 page) work, he marshals evidence and arguments in an effort to prove that the "New Christians" were sincere adherents of Christianity, and even "ardent assimilationists" who were eager to marry into Christian families and otherwise melt into Spanish society. Consistent with this, Netanyahu seeks to prove that the Inquisitors, as well as the anti-Converso pogromists who preceded them, were immoral, bigoted hypocrites who knew that the Conversos were actually sincere Christians.

In keeping with his thesis, Netanyahu also castigates the Conversos for their supposed lack of Jewish loyalty, effectively writing them off as traitors to Judaism. He unfavorably compares the Conversos to the Jews of medieval Germany, who "far surpassed the Jews of Spain in religious devotion and readiness for martyrdom" (p. 163). From Netanyahu's perspective, these Iberian Jews, rather than convert to Christianity, should have accepted martyrdom like their Ashkenazi co-religionists (in central and nothern Europe) at the hands of the marauding Crusaders in 1096.

Racial-Ethnic Hatred?

If the Conversos were really loyal Christians, and if even the Inquisitors believed that these New Christians were sincere in their new faith, Netanyahu asks, what motivated the Inquisition in persecuting them? He believes that the Inquisitors were motivated not by religious zeal but by a passionate racial-ethnic hatred of the Jews — one supposedly similar to that which prevailed in Third Reich Germany.

To this end he points to Spain's introduction of the concept of *limpieza de sangre*, "purity of blood,"



Map of Spain, showing the permanent tribunals of the Spanish Inquisition.

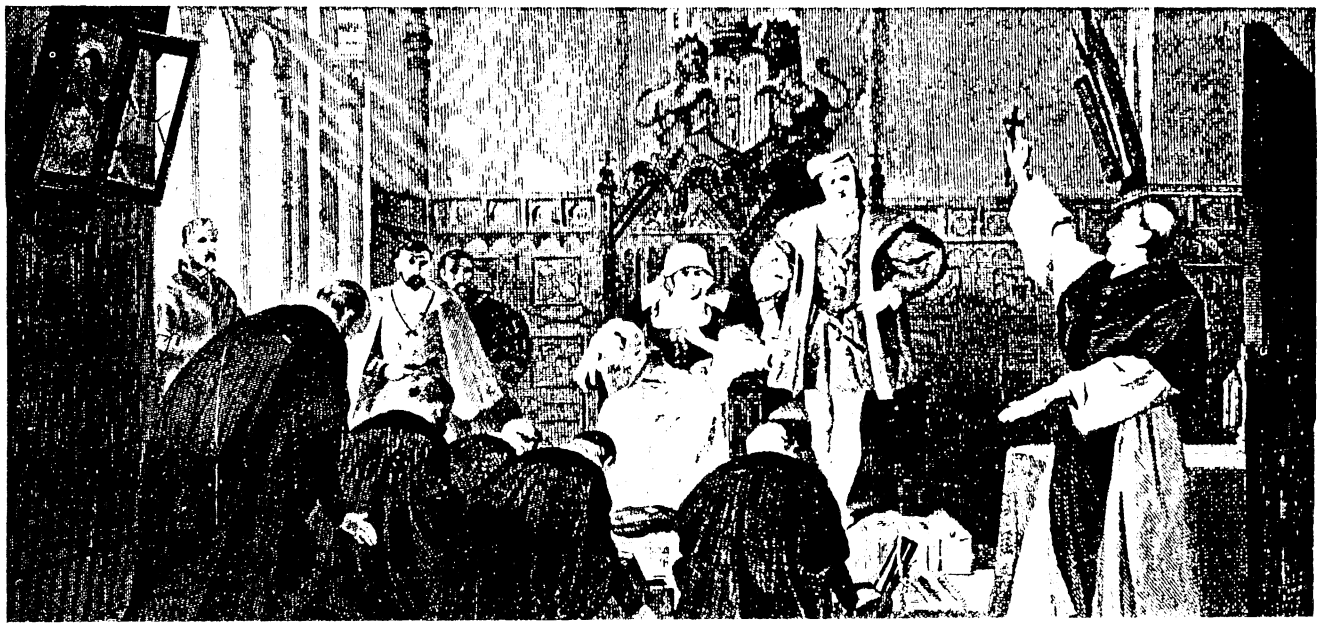
and not mere public profession of faith, as a test of fitness. In city after city, laws were enacted disqualifying people of "impure" (Jewish) blood from entering universities, religious orders and city councils.

Actually, this Spanish "racism" was a response to the ardent ethnic consciousness of the Jews — both open and secret. In his 1954 study, *The Structure of Spanish History*, historian Américo Castro finds that Jewish "racism" long preceded the Spanish concern for *limpieza*:[20]

> The people who really felt the scruple of purity of blood were the Spanish Jews ... The historical reality becomes intelligible to us only when seen to be possessed of both extremes: the exclusivism of Catholic Spain was a reply to the hermeticism of the *aljamas* [Jewish communities] ... purity of blood was the answer of a society animated by anti-Jewish fury to the racial hermeticism of the Jew.

In a society in which religious considerations were paramount, racial or ethnic criteria were not theologically legitimate factors in defining and categorizing social groups. The Inquisition, Netanyahu maintains, acted against a racial-ethnic group under cover of defending Christian faith to attain political-economic goals. The Inquisitors, he argues, cited theologically acceptable criteria to give an appearance of legitimacy to their campaign to oppose and neutralize Converso power. "The Inquisition never revealed its true aims and instead veiled its motives with arguments designed to justify its actions on moral grounds, as well as to give them an air of sanctity" (p. 1085).

If, as Netanyahu contends, the Inquisitors were driven by racial-ethnic hatred of Jews, and not concern about the authenticity of their Christian loy-



After Ferdinand and Isabella issued their edict expelling the Jews from Spain (according to an often-repeated but probably apocryphal story), several prominent Jewish community leaders met with the royal couple to persuade them to revoke the decree. In return they promised to turn over the enormous sum of 30,000 gold ducats. Visibly impressed, the King seemed ready to rescind his decree. At this moment, Inquisitor General Torquemada burst into the hall, held high a crucifix, and said: "Judas Iscariot betrayed Christ for 30 pieces of silver. Will your highness sell him for 30,000 ducats? Here He is, take Him and sell Him." The King then dismissed the Jewish leaders.

alty, how is it that not every Converso investigated by the Inquisition was convicted? Or why would the Inquisitors spare the lives of those who repented and embraced Christianity? Netanyahu himself concedes (p. 1085) that "religious interests ... no doubt motivated some of its [the Inquisition's] leaders." This startling admission, made almost in passing, undermines the author's central thesis about the supposedly racialist motivations of the Inquisitors.

Indicting the Conversos

One prominent 15th-century figure who clearly believed in the validity of the charges made against the Conversos was historian Andrés Bernáldez. He charged these secret Jews with religious heresy and with continuing a separate peoplehood (note his use of the term "tribe"). In the following statement, this scholar sums up the popular accusations at the time of the establishment of the Inquisition:[21]

> Those people who can avoid baptizing their children, do so, and those who have them baptized wash them off as soon as they return home ... They follow all the judaical ceremonies secretly so far as they can.
>
> The men as well as the women always avoid receiving the sacraments of Holy Church voluntarily. When they confess, they never tell the truth; and it happened that one confessor asked a person of this tribe to cut off a piece of his garment for him, saying, "Since you have never sinned, I should like to have a bit of your garment for a relic to heal the sick."
>
> ... Not without reason did Our Redeemer call them a wicked and adulterous generation. They do not believe that God rewards virginity and chastity. All their endeavor is to increase and multiply. And in the time when this heretical iniquity flourished, many monasteries were violated by their wealthy men and merchants, and many professed nuns were ravished and mocked, some through gifts and some through the lures of panderers, they not believing in or fearing excommunications; but they did it to injure Jesus Christ and the Church. And usually, for the most part, they were usurious people, of many wiles and deceits, for they all live by easy occupations and offices, and in buying and selling they have no conscience where Christians are concerned.
>
> Never would they undertake the occupations of tilling the soil or digging or cattle-raising, nor would they teach their children any except holding public offices, and sitting down to earn enough to eat with little labor. Many of them in these realms in a short time acquired

very great fortunes and estates, since they had no conscience in their profits and usuries, saying that they only gained at the expense of their enemies, according to the command of God in the departure of the people of Israel to rob the Egyptians ...

Passion and Bias

Netanyahu makes no effort to hide his passion or his bias. He lives in Israel. He emigrated to Palestine as a child and fought as a member of Ze'ev Jabotinsky's militant Zionist organization. His son Benjamin is the leader of Israel's ultra-nationalist Likud party, and this book is dedicated "with unrelieved grief" to his son Jonathan, who died leading the Israeli raid on Entebbe. It is difficult to avoid the feeling that Benzion Netanyahu's personal devotion to Jewry is essential to this work and its thesis.[22]

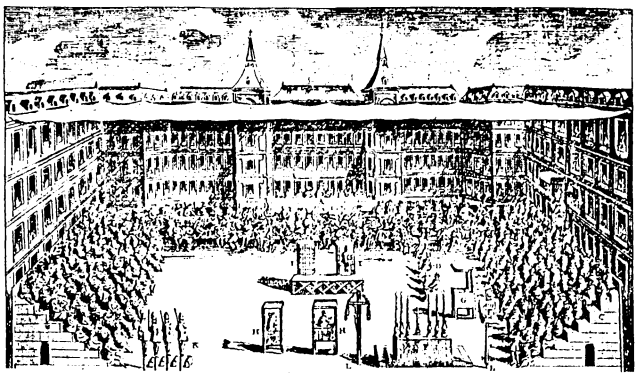
The following quotation (pp. 1085-1086) gives the flavor of Netanyahu's passion for his subject:

> As we see it, the "hearts" of the Inquisitors — i.e., their mental constitutions — were incurably perverted by the various influences that shaped their thinking and their tendencies. Apart from the religious interests (which no doubt motivated some of its leaders), these tendencies were expressed by the officials of the Inquisition, down to its lowest functionaries and agents, in a blatant disregard for human life; a fervid desire to flaunt power and exercise control over life and death; a capacity for repression that could crush any spirit; a morbid passion for inflicting torture and causing pain that could break all resistance; and apart from all this, a shameless rapacity designed to render the torturer also the inheritor of his victim's goods.

In Netanyahu's view, these opponents of the New Christians are barely recognizable as human. Predictably, he can't resist comparing the Spanish Inquisitors with the German National Socialists of our own century (p. 1084):

> ... Like the Spanish antisemites' hatred of the conversos, the German Nazis' hatred of the Jews so affected their thinking, their policies and decisions that all their activities, in virtually all fields, were influenced in varying measure by that hate. Not only did that odium obsess them, but it overflowed their souls to the point where it needed more objects of torture, exploitation and destruction than the Jewish people could possibly provide.

Clearly this is no dispassionate scholar seeking historical truth, but rather an academic zealot bent



This Inquisitional tribunal, meeting in Madrid on June 30, 1680, sentenced 18 Marranos to be burned alive.

on carrying on intellectual warfare, even more than 500 years after the events he discusses. Netanyahu compares Hitler with Spanish king Philip II, each of them with "minds unhinged at least partly by the maddening [anti-Jewish] urges to which we have referred." He continues (pp. 1084-85):

> Thus we see how both these developments — the Spanish and the German — which so drastically affected the history of Europe and had their beginnings in those torrents of hate which stemmed from ancient and later antisemitism, managed to produce anti-social forces which, driven as they were by their fierce animosities, proved almost impossible to restrain.

(In keeping with the currently fashionable spelling of the term, Netanyahu consistently writes of "antisemitism.")

Deceptive Scholarship

Netanyahu's suggestion that Spanish hostility toward Jews was unusual or aberrant is erroneous. Animosity toward Jews was the norm, not the exception, in Europe during this entire period. In England, for example, Jews were entirely banned. (They had been expelled in 1290, and were not legally permitted back until 1656, more than three centuries later.) This era of Jewish expulsion encompassed the Elizabethan period and the nation's golden age of culture, which included Shakespeare and Marlowe (each of whom wrote plays dealing with the "Jewish question"). Jews were similarly driven out of many other European lands: In 1492 they were expelled from Sicily and Sardinia, in 1496 from Portugal, in 1541 from Naples, and in 1596 Pope Pius V expelled the Jews from the Papal territories. From the kingdom of France the Jews were expelled in 1306, and again in 1322 and 1394. Jews were banished from Warsaw in

1483.

Essentially Netanyahu proceeds by ignoring scholarship that conflicts with his ideas — by discounting as untrustworthy and biased any sources from the anti-Converso movement or the Inquisition — while at the same time regarding the work of recognized New Christian apologists such as Fernán Díaz and Cardinal Juan de Torquemada, not to mention rabbinical sources, as based on "fact and logic" (p. 410) and entitled to "the fullest and most careful consideration" (p. 443).[23]

This bias can also be found in Netanyahu's earlier book, *The Marranos of Spain*, which baldly states its intention to question the moral basis of the Inquisition, and takes essentially the same position as the present work regarding the Conversos and the sincerity of their Christianity.[24] This earlier work has been subjected to devastating criticism.[25]

His tendentiousness is so transparent, in fact, that one reviewer of the present work, historian Richard Kagan, could only interpret Netanyahu's style of historiography as a reaction to the Holocaust:[26]

> Mr. Netanyahu's expansive, highly personal and emotive style carries us back to another era, to a mode of polemical discourse rarely practiced among professional historians today. More poignantly, this book illustrates the lasting intellectual repercussions of the Holocaust on historical scholarship about the Jews.

The general flavor of Netanyahu's methodology can be illustrated by his discussion of Cardinal Juan de Torquemada's writings. Like several other prominent 15th-century figures, Cardinal Torquemada (uncle of Inquisitor General Tomás de Torquemada) was a Converso who rose rapidly in the Church hierarchy and used his position to *defend* his fellow converts. Netanyahu maintains that Torquemada's writings exonerating the New Christians should be given great weight even though he acknowledges Torquemada's apologetic tendencies whenever the Cardinal discusses the relationship between Christianity and the Jewish people. In one case, Netanyahu describes Torquemada's distortion of the essential spirit of St. Augustine's writings as

The Spanish Inquisition in Reality and Myth

Much of the sinister reputation of the Spanish Inquisition, promoted even in major motion pictures, is undeserved. Oxford University lecturer Reginald Trevor Davies, a specialist of Spanish history, confirms this in an article published in the 1957 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (vol. 21, pp. 121-122). Explaining how the historical truth has been distorted, he writes:

> The Spanish church was wealthy and powerful because the people were intensely religious and because it was largely a national institution in which no foreigner might hold office and in which the crown was supreme ... It was, consequently, a fact of serious political importance that during the anarchy of Henry IV's reign (1454-75) the Jews gained great power and influence. They might compel — sometimes by means of their usury — their debtors to renounce the Christian religion; and Marranos (baptized Jews) often preserved the old religious faith in secret ...
>
> The familiars of the Inquisition, exercising ceaseless vigilance in the remotest corners of Spain, may be fittingly compared with the justices of the peace who did so much to uphold the throne of Tudor England ...
>
> It cannot be denied that the Inquisition was guilty of abuses and cruelties in the course of its long history, but it was no more unjust or inhumane than most other courts of the Europe of its day. The traditional exaggerations about it were derived from the works of Juan Antonio Llorente (1756-1823), 19th century liberals and a number of historical novelists and dramatists ...
>
> Llorente's *Histoire critique de l'inquisition d'Espagne*, 4 vols. (Paris, 1817-18) was widely used by anti-Catholic propagandists and translated into several languages. The author's life was such that his work may well be supposed to be extremely tendentious; he wrote to please those who happened to be in power. He used many documents taken from the archives of the Inquisition but carefully selected them to support the case he wished to advocate.

Edward Peters, Professor of Medieval History at the University of Pennsylvania, has detailed the development and impact of the Inquisition as historical myth. In his book *Inquisition*, published in 1988 by the Free Press (pp. 1, 2, 231, 263, 308) he writes:

> Between the twelfth and the sixteenth centuries in western Europe, the Latin Christian Church adapted certain elements of Roman legal procedure and charged papally appointed clergy to employ them in order to preserve orthodox religious beliefs from the attacks of heretics ... Between the sixteenth and the twentieth centuries ... these procedures, personnel and institutions were transformed by polemic and fiction into myth, the myth of *The Inquisition*. The institutions and the myth lived — and developed — in western Europe and the New World until the early

part of a programmatic tendency to reject or ignore traditional Christian perspectives in which the Jews are portrayed as damned for their rejection of God.

By engaging in such deceptive scholarship, writes Netanyahu (p. 464), Cardinal Torquemada was able to project

> an image of the Jewish people that was quite opposed to the Christian view. Obviously, no better way could be found to attain this than to let Augustine speak in his behalf — that is, to quote those passages of his works in which the Jews, regardless of what Augustine was driving at, emerge as a people whose religious history and achievements evoked the astonishment and awe of the great saint and, indeed, cannot fail to excite the admiration of anyone who has a sense for the wondrous and divine.

In trying to show that the Jews are assured salvation, adds Netanyahu (pp. 466, 467), Torquemada "had to resort to strenuous maneuvering to make the points he thought vital for his case." Netanyahu also concedes that "this kind of manipulation of sources violates modern scholarly norms, and even a medieval critical reader might question its propriety."

Netanyahu shows how Torquemada drastically distorts his sources to produce a deceitfully positive portrayal of Jews. At the same time, though, Netanyahu urges us to accept at face value Torquemada's claim that the vast majority of the Conversos were entirely sincere in their devotion to Christianity.

A Tradition of Biased Scholarship

As already noted, Prof. Kagan attributes Netanyahu's passion for polemics to the trauma of the Holocaust tragedy suffered by Jews during the Second World War. Actually, there is a very long tradition of Jewish scholarship that deliberately distorts the historical record to further Jewish group interests. Not only does Netanyahu carry on this tradition of slanted scholarship in his own work, he also exonerates the New Christian historians who systematically did the same.

For example, one Converso historian went to great lengths to remove explicit references to tax collectors as "infidels and heretics" because contemporary readers would identify them as New Christians. "That this was the sole intent," writes Netanyahu, "and that he was ready to go to any length to fulfill it by altering, mutilating and abbreviating the original, and also by deleting whole passages ... is evident from his whole revision of the manuscript and the careful thought he gave to every expression that might cast a shadow of disrepute on the conversos" (p. 635).

Netanyahu regards such distortion of the historical record as morally and intellectually justified (pp. 660-661):

> Their "falsification" of the records could appear to them, in their overall considerations, as the presentation of the *inner* truth of history, while the fuller and ostensibly truthful presentation could be judged by them as leading to misunderstandings and hence to distortion of the basic facts ... Obviously such a form of revision would involve a flagrant distortion of the truth. But historical truth was less important in their eyes than the consequences it entailed for the welfare of their group.

In other words, a truthful account would have described in detail the charges of heresy made by the Old Christians against the New Christians. But such an account might lead Old Christians to believe that the charges were true, and, because this awareness would have had undesirable consequences, the New Christian chroniclers were justi-

---

nineteenth century, when most of the inquisitions were abolished, and the myth itself was universalized ...

Although the inquisitions disappeared, *The Inquisition* did not. The myth was originally devised to serve variously the political purposes of a number of early modern political regimes, as well as Protestant Reformers, proponents of religious and civil toleration, philosophical enemies of the civil power of organized religions, and progressive modernists; but the myth remained durable, widely adaptable, and useful, so that in time it came to be woven tightly into the fabric of modern consciousness. So tight is its place in that weave that the myth has been revived in the twentieth century ...

Some myths are tougher and more durable than the occasions which first create and employ them. *The Inquisition* [as myth] was an invention of the religious disputes and political conflicts of the sixteenth century. It was adapted to the causes of religious toleration and philosophical and political enlightenment in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. In this process, although it was always anti-Catholic and usually anti-Spanish, it tended to become universalized, until, by the end of the eighteenth century, it had become the representative of all repressive religions that opposed freedom of conscience, political liberty and philosophical enlightenment.

In the United States, far more than in Europe, *The Inquisition* remained an evil abstraction, sustained by anti-Catholicism and supported by political opposition.

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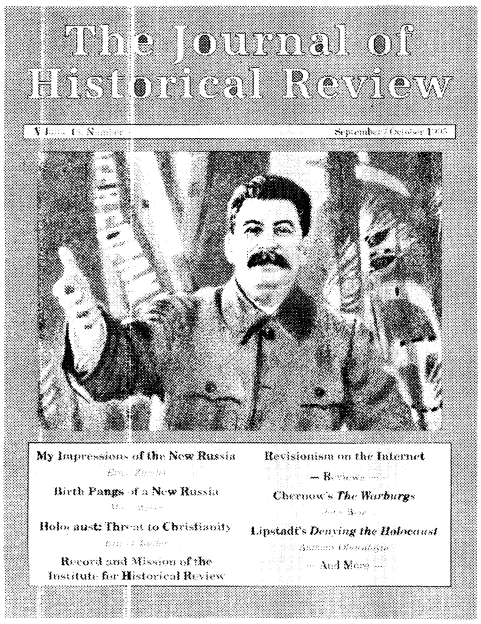
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fied in their deception. Moreover, writes Netanyahu, such New Christian historians were justified in their distortion of the record because they "believed [not only] that the Marranos, or their overwhelming majority, were free from the execrable crime of heresy, but [also] that their accusers, too were well aware of this" (p. 660).

Both these claims are doubtful. Minimally, the proposal that the Old Christians did not believe their own charges is highly unlikely, given the human tendency to assume the worst about one's perceived enemies. For Netanyahu, however, putting group interests above truth is itself an acceptable standard of veracity for these New Christian historians. So justifiable does Netanyahu find such deception that one can only suppose that he applies this same standard in his own work.

Historical Evidence Ignored

Like the 15th-century chroniclers who falsified their work by omitting crucial details, Netanyahu does not mention recent scholarship indicating that the New Christians were a religiously diverse group that included a substantial percentage of crypto-Jews.[27] In a critical review of Netanyahu's book, professor David Berger of Brooklyn College writes: "It is hardly an exaggeration to say that an entire generation of recent scholarship goes unrepresented here."[28] Berger goes on to write that "this book is marked by a degree of confidence unjustified by the nature of the sources," and that the author engages in a "reconstruction of motives and intentions based on slim evidence."

Perhaps most egregiously, Netanyahu places no weight on the fact that over the long life of the Inquisition many New Christians (re-)assumed overt Jewish identities after they emigrated from Spain. Historian Howard Fast writes admiringly:[29]

> During the next two hundred years, the boldest, the toughest, and the most sensitive of the Marranos left Spain. They left family by family, some openly, some secretly, but in almost every case, these Marranos, some of whose families had been outwardly Christian for several hundred years, underwent circumcision and returned to the Jewish fold the moment they were out of the Inquisition's power.

When Netanyahu does mention this phenomenon, his main point is to assert that it was unreasonable for 15th-century Spaniards to infer that the Converso relatives (in Spain) of crypto-Jews who had assumed overtly Jewish identities after emigration were themselves crypto-Jews (p. 945). Netanyahu holds 15th-century Spaniards to a very high standard of proof indeed!

In this same passage (p. 945), Netanyahu states that it is "hardly surprising" that emigrating New Christians assumed overt Jewish identities, given the hostility they had experienced in Spain. But if this hostility was so intense that it motivated emigrating New Christians to openly proclaim Judaism after leaving the country, it is only reasonable to suppose that this same fervent hostility would motivate those who remained in Spain to be crypto-Jews, rather than sincerely embrace the Christian faith. How can Netanyahu logically suppose that the New Christians who remained in Spain were any more sincere in their Christianity than their emigrating brethren?

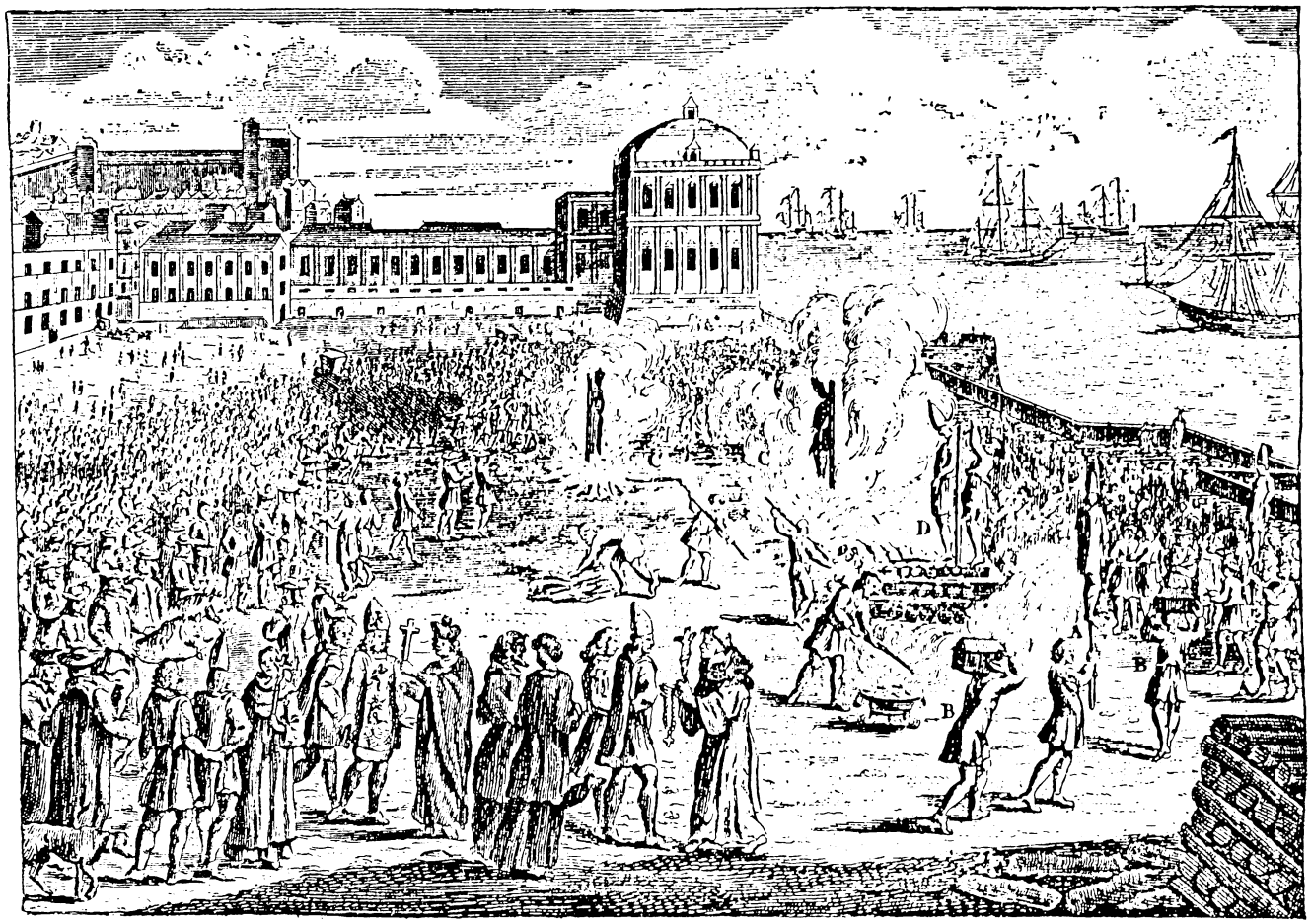
A Distinct Nationality

A critical point here is that Netanyahu attaches no moral importance to a key fact about 15th-century Spain — that the New Christians, whatever their religious beliefs, constituted a highly successful and even dominating group within Spanish society. All scholars of the period, including Netanyahu, agree that the New Christians remained throughout a clearly distinguishable group, one with high levels of within-group cooperation and patronage, and quite self-aware of its particular status. This "groupness" of the Conversos was independent of whether they secretly regarded themselves as Jews.

Netanyahu deserves praise for providing massive detail about both the group cohesiveness of the New Christians as well as for showing the economic and social roots of the animosity of the Old Christians. In this regard he is well within the mainstream of historical research. Throughout the period of the Inquisition, both in the Iberian peninsula and the New World, the New Christians were organized as a set of intermarrying and interlocking family clans characterized by high levels of within-group cooperation and patronage in pursuit of economic and political goals.[30]

Netanyahu's description of the "peoplehood" of the New Christians is quite accurate and bears quoting at length (pp. 993-994, 995, 996):

> Yet while the convert abandoned his people, his peoplehood did not abandon him. It was reflected in many of his characteristics, the product of numerous factors — ethnic, social, environmental and educational — that had influenced Jewish life for centuries. These were essentially *Jewish* characteristics; and although assimilation had somewhat dimmed them, they could still be discerned in the Jewish convert even decades after his conversion.
>
> ... When masses of Jews were converted at the same time, each of them saw himself *within his people* and by no means as one who had forsaken it. In Spain, where these converts or their great majority lived for many years in



A public burning of heretics sentenced by the Inquisition is portrayed in this 18th-century print.

boroughs of their own, this feeling of communion was kept alive as long as the process of assimilation had not destroyed, or seriously affected, the collective fabric.

Also many characteristics of the Jew and his life-style, which even isolated converts retained for many years, were guarded for much larger periods in the converso communities. As a result, the converso could still be recognized — even several generations after his ancestors' conversion — by his Jewish appearance, his habits and mannerisms, his attitudes and reactions, as well as his views on a variety of issues. In consequence, in the middle of the 15th century (and no doubt in many cases even later) the great majority of the New Christians in Spain had not yet shaken off the shadow of their past; and the result of this fact was the consciousness of their "otherness" that determined the attitude of their neighbors ...

The Marranos were viewed as a distinct *nationality* which, in more ways than one, was related to the Jews. Indeed, not only did their enemies so regard them, but also their friends among the Old Christians; and, what is more, they were so regarded by the Marranos themselves ...

As a "nation apart," despite their conversion, as a nation united by common origin or race, the Marranos were thus exposed to the evaluation of their group as an *alien national entity*, whose fellowships with the *people of the country* must be questioned, and whose preparedness to betray it could be taken as likely even by moderate adversaries. [italics in text]

Beyond this very clear realization that the New Christians retained their sense of peoplehood and ethnicity, as well their sense of constituting a separate group within Spanish society, Netanyahu does not deny that there was a hard core of self-consciously crypto-Jews among the New Christians prior to the Inquisition. "That there were some Jewish pockets among the Marranos in the sixties [1460s], and probably in the seventies too, may be taken for granted," he writes. (p. 931). Indeed, another point of unanimity among the 15th-century New Christian apologists and their opponents is the

acknowledgment that at least some among the Conversos had retained Jewish religious beliefs (p. 625).

Given the prevailing outlook of the period, and the hostile nature of inter-group relations, the realization that some Conversos were really crypto-Jews could well be expected to bring sanctions against the entire group of Conversos — especially because, while it was known that at least some were deceivers, it was very difficult to determine what people believed in their hearts.

Netanyahu's moral censure of the Inquisitors is based on an individualistic moral sense that was entirely foreign to the sensibility not only of corporate Medieval society but even more to traditional Judaism. New Christians perceived themselves and were perceived by others as members of an alien and detested group within Spanish society. As one might expect, Spaniards tended to "assume the worst" about them, especially when it was well known that, among other things, emigrating New Christians rapidly assumed overt Jewish identities in other lands.

Economic and Political Power

Netanyahu has done a service in identifying the social, economic and political sources of inter-group conflict that were critical in the establishment of the Inquisition. "Indubitably," he acknowledges, "the factor that first put much strain on the relations between the Old Christians and the New was the growth of converso economic power" (p. 1044)

He also provides considerable detail on the extent of Converso economic and political domination of Spain's traditional Christians. In so doing Netanyahu goes a long way toward showing why, apart from any question of religious heresy, the Conversos were so widely hated by the non-noble classes or estates. Conversos emerged as a dominant force in the areas of finance, commerce, international trade, law, diplomacy, and all levels of public administration. Wealthy Conversos purchased and endowed ecclesiastical benefices for their children with the result that many members of the high clergy were of Jewish descent. And high level New Christian officeholders (such as Fernán Díaz, secretary to King Juan II) appointed fellow Conversos to positions throughout the government bureaucracy.

In his 1932 study, *A History of the Marranos*, Cecil Roth summed up the incredible situation in forthright language that would scarcely be permitted today:[31]

> The Law, the administration, the army, the universities, the Church itself, were all overrun by recent converts of more or less questionable sincerity, or by their immediate descendents. They thronged the financial administration, for which they had a natural aptitude, protest now being impossible. They pushed their way into the municipal councils, into the legislatures, into the judiciary. They all but dominated Spanish life.

Powerful Middlemen

At the heart of the conflict between Old and New Christians was the familiar tendency of the non-Jewish ruling elite to utilize Jews to further their interests at the expense of the non-elite members of society, that is, of the great mass of the Spanish people. Beginning in the Greco-Roman and Persian world of antiquity and extending into the post World War II era of Soviet domination of Eastern Europe, Jews have often served as middlemen between oppressive ruling elites (especially those of alien origin), and native populations. A significant source of animosity toward the Jews in Christian Spain was the widespread belief that the Jews had aided the Muslim invasion of Spain in the eighth century, and in the ensuing centuries had served the Muslims as loyal administrators over the subject Christian population. (Modern scholars, including Netanyahu [p. 57], accept that this belief is based in fact.)

Jews were typically recruited for this status because they were known to have no strong loyalty to the native people or culture. Ruling elites knew that Jewish loyalty to the regime derived from their status as dependent aliens. In Spain, there was a long history of kings patronizing the Jewish community in return for Jewish loyalty as administrators and tax farmers, and in the 15th century these functions were assumed by the New Christians. (In return for payment of a fixed sum of money, determined through bidding, the king commissioned the highest bidder as a tax farmer, granting him the exclusive right to amass as much money as he could collect through taxes levied on the people of a given district.)

As in many other traditional societies, the Jews' alien or outgroup status with regard to the rest of society, and their loyalty to the king (rather than to the people or nation) made them ideal tax farmers. Rulers knew that because the Jews (or, after 1391 in Spain, the Conversos) had no loyalty to the native people, they could be trusted to treat the non-Jewish subjects as an outgroup, and would thereby maximize the king's revenues. (By contrast, to employ non-Jews as tax collectors would be disadvantageous, because their identification with the native population would make them less likely to wring out the maximum amount in taxes.)

"Tax collection remained largely in Jewish hands until the end of the Jewish sojourn in Spain," writes Netanyahu. He continues (pp. 71-72):

> It was primarily because of the functions of the Jews as the king's revenue gatherers in the urban areas that the cities saw the Jews as the monarch's agents, who treated the common people as objects of massive exploitation. By serving as they did the interests of the kings, the Jews seemed to be working against the interests of the cities; and thus we touch again on the phenomenon we have referred to: the fundamental conflict between the kings and their people — a conflict not limited to financial matters, but one that embraced all spheres of government that had a bearing on the people's life.
>
> It was in part thanks to this conflict of interests that the Jews could survive the harsh climate of the Middle Ages, and it is hard to believe that they did not discern it when they came to resettle in Christian Europe. Indeed, their requests, since the days of the Carolingians, for assurances of protection before they settled in a place show (a) that they realized that the kings' positions on many issues differed from those of the common people and (b) that the kings were prepared, for the sake of *their* interests, to make common cause with the "alien" Jews against the clear wishes of their Christian subjects. In a sense, therefore, the Jews' agreements with the kings in the Middle Ages resembled the understandings they had reached with foreign conquerors in the ancient world.

As Netanyahu notes, Jews were well aware of their role as intermediaries between conflicting segments of gentile society (rulers and subjects). There is no question that as a result of their special relationship with the king, Jews were often viewed as exploiters by the common people. The Petition of 1449 by the rebels of Toledo accused the New Christian tax gatherers of having "caused the [economic] ruin ... of many noble proprietresses (dueñas, caballeros, and *hijos-dalgo*)" and of having "oppressed, destroyed, robbed and depraved ... most of the old houses and estates of the Old Christians" (p. 959). "Throughout the country," historian Cecil Roth has noted, "they [the Conversos] farmed the taxes. Thus, they inevitably became identified in the popular mind with the royal oppression."[32]

An Alliance of Oppression

Netanyahu provides considerable detailed evidence showing that during the 15th century the kings of Spain utilized the New Christians in this very traditional manner as a highly competent intermediary group between themselves and the great mass of Christian subjects. Alvaro de Luna, King Juan II's chief minister, advanced the fortunes of both Jews and New Christians as a force loyal to the monarchy in its struggles with the nobility, and in preference to the non-Jewish urban aristocracy. New Christians were even more valuable than Jews because, as nominal Christians, they gave a sort of theoretical legitimacy to activities such as tax farming that was lacking when Jews performed these functions (Netanyahu, pp. 217ff).

Conversion therefore put a new twist to the traditional Jewish role as an alien, exploitative middleman. A 15th-century satirist depicts an Old Christian lamenting that the New Christians, because of their ostensible conversion, had become "legitimate" and were now entitled to use their "manipulations, chicaneries, subtleties and deceits, without fear of God and shame of the people" (p. 513). Conversion had not changed the cohesiveness or group status of the "Hebrew race," nor their eagerness to exploit the Old Christian population — but merely by changing their surface religion, their much-resented behavior toward the Old Christians had now become permissible, at least from a Christian theological perspective.

Spaniards understandably continued to regard the Jewish "New Christians" as a cohesive group that very successfully exploited the traditional (Old) Christian population. In spite of conversion, this group persisted in many of the same oppressive activities that had provoked anti-Jewish hatred prior to their conversion, especially tax farming and collaborating with the king against the interests of the people.

For all his biased interpretation of sources, the facts presented by Netanyahu are consistent with the following overall scenario: The Conversos remained a separate, unassimilated "nation apart" within Spanish society well into the 15th century, and indeed through the height of the Inquisition period, and even into the 18th century. Freed from the traditional economic and social constraints placed on Jews, this self-aware ethnic-cultural group rose quickly to a position of dominance, and was correctly perceived by the mass of people (Old Christians) as an alien, exploitative enclave.

It is this fundamentally unhealthy situation that ultimately led to the Inquisition. Indeed, it is this general condition (which of course has varied in particulars from country to country and from age to age), that has provoked hostility toward Jews throughout history.

Conflict Between Rulers and Subjects

In Spain, periods of close Jewish ties to the monarch and the country's ruling elite were characterized by exploitation of the common people by the rulers, and alienation between the monarch and his subjects. Given the generally hostile relationship

This fanciful English illustration purports to show an Inquisition torture chamber. Contrary to popular belief, inquisitors actually employed torture only on rare occasions.

between Jews and non-Jews in Spanish society, it is not surprising that changes of government or periods of royal weakness often resulted in anti-Jewish pogroms, especially in the century prior to the establishment of the Inquisition.

As Netanyahu shows, the closer the alliance between the King and the Conversos, the greater the hostility toward the King among the people. Fray Alonso de Espina, a Franciscan friar who was instrumental in establishing the Inquisition, not only hated the Conversos, he also condemned the rulers who had betrayed their people. Quoting Espina, Netanyahu writes (p. 731) that he sharply criticized the

> "detested avarice of the Christian princes" and "the temporal gains which they get from the Jews" that brings them to let the Jewish crimes go unpunished. It is their excessive converse with the Jews, and the numerous gifts they receive from them, that lead them to permit the "ravenous wolves" who have entered the "flock" of God to continue their ravages without opposition.

Espina praised the rulers of England and France for their wisdom and concern for the good of their nations in expelling the Jews from their realms. He had particular praise for French King Philip II (Augustus) as a ruler who "burned with the zeal of God" when, in the year 1182, he despoiled the Jews of his country and expelled them, in spite of pleas from the nobility and prelates, and offers of bribes from the Jews. (p. 831).

A Double Standard

Netanyahu is exquisitely sensitive to the "immorality" of the Old Christians when or if they exaggerated a lack of religious sincerity among the Conversos. Similarly, he condemns the Inquisition for its "blatant disregard for human life ... [its] desire to flaunt power and exercise control over life and death ... [and its] shameless rapacity" (pp. 1085-1086).

But Netanyahu's moral sense is one-sided. He implicitly suggests that the Spaniards should have

been unconcerned that they were being dominated and exploited by an alien group, and that their aristocracy, and indeed the entire upper classes, were fast becoming "New Christian." In Netanyahu's view, the Spaniards should have acknowledged their inferiority and humbly acquiesced in their own economic, social and political domination by an outgroup dedicated to its own interests. The astonishing notion that a people is morally obligated to passively accept its own eclipse and domination is certainly not likely to appeal to sincere advocates of social justice, whatever their ideology. Such a "morality" is unlikely to win approval by any subjugated nation.

Netanyahu seems incapable of seeing the self-centered and even hypocritical nature of this interpretation of history, apparently because he views morality through strictly Jewish-Zionist eyes. While accepting the view that Jews constitute a distinct national-religious group, and that the Jewish people-nation can and should compete with non-Jewish nations for resources and power, he condemns as immoral the efforts by non-Jews to resist or counter Jewish domination. Institutions developed by non-Jews to protect and further their own group interests — such as the Inquisition — are predictably seen by Netanyahu (as well as by other similarly motivated historians) as the height of immorality.

In Netanyahu's view, efforts by non-Jews to increase their own power and position at the expense of Jews are inherently immoral, and are ascribed to motives of envy, jealousy and racism. (Netanyahu repeatedly calls the Inquisitors and the anti-Converso pogromists "racists.") On the other hand, he sees nothing wrong or immoral about the efforts by Jews throughout history to take and maintain economic, social and political power, often with great success, at the expense of others. Thus he portrays the motives of the Conversos as entirely natural human strivings for money, political power and social status. Consistent with this, he regards tax farming as a morally neutral activity that was a necessary part of the machinery of government in the Middle Ages.

Effective Strategies

In spite of the author's intellectual dishonesty and ethical bankruptcy, this book is worthwhile. In addition to a careful chronicling of the close relationships between Spanish kings and their Converso subjects, and a detailed summary of the social and political sources of animosity toward the Conversos, it provides a wealth of information on the intellectual, social, and political battles between Spaniards and Conversos in the 15th century. Netanyahu also presents a valuable and interesting account of the multifaceted strategies used by the Conversos to attain their social and political goals — strategies that presage many of the techniques Jews have used in modern societies to combat anti-Semitism and further their interests.

While attention has already been drawn to some of the activities of 15th-century New Christian intellectual apologists, this scarcely begins to tell the whole story. During the Inquisition period, Jewish emigrants from Spain and Portugal produced a large body of polemical, apologetic literature meant to refute Christianity and bolster the resolve of the crypto-Jews who remained on the Iberian peninsula.[33]

In addition, Netanyahu shows that even prior to the Inquisition, New Christian intellectuals such as Fernán Díaz, Cardinal Juan de Torquemada, and Alonso de Cartagena emerged to defend the supposedly sincere Christian orthodoxy of the New Christians, to refute the arguments of the Conversos' enemies, and to develop novel theological arguments that portrayed the Jews, both in Old Testament and modern times, in a positive light. To do so, these writers had to counter a very large body of Christian writing that depicted Jews in a searingly negative light. Their success in this task impressively illustrates the ability of Jewish intellectuals throughout the ages to fashion effective strategies, conforming to the currently prevailing *zeitgeist*, in defense of Jewish (or, in this case, New Christian) interests.

Clever Justifications

It is noteworthy that within this entire body of pro-Converso writing, Jews are regarded as a distinct ethnic-racial group. The writings of the Converso Bishop Alonso de Cartagena, for example, viewed Jews as a group that was "united by a blood relationship whose origins went back to Abraham" (Netanyahu, p. 530). Cartagena argued that God chose Abraham to be the progenitor of the people that would be dedicated to His service, and because of their special role as the carnal progenitors of Christ, they had to remain separate from other peoples and occupy an elevated moral status compared to other humans: "Not only was the Jewish people raised to the status of nobility in mankind ... it was also allotted the status of holiness" (p. 533).

In a twist on the traditional Jewish view of themselves as a special, "chosen" people, Conversos portrayed themselves as constituting a kind of closed religious order made up of morally superior individuals distinguished by a superior biological heritage — a group therefore worthy of being the progenitors of Christ. Consistent with this view, the conversion of the Jews to Christianity was really no conversion at all, because it merely represented a

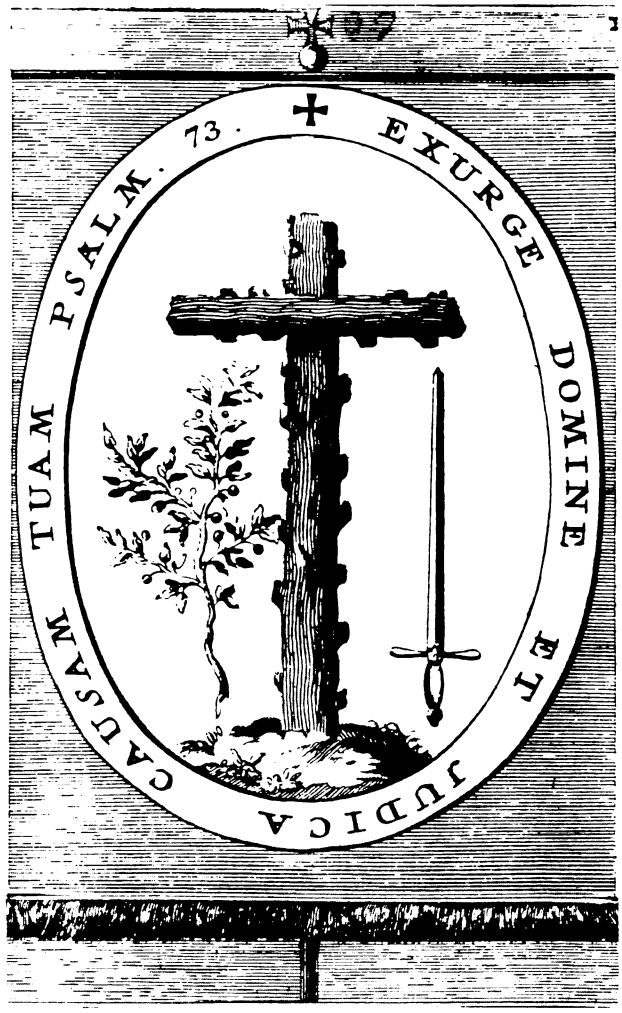
higher fulfillment of their great and predestined historical role. Converso intellectuals developed this fantastic argument to refute charges by their enemies that baptized Jews would be unable to accommodate themselves to Christian teachings.[34]

A remarkable aspect of New Christian apologias, and their intellectual defenses generally, is that they were crafted in such a manner that the Conversos could view and portray themselves as remaining loyal to their (Jewish) peoplehood and (Mosaic) law. (pp. 936-937). By superficially becoming Christians while at the same time retaining their ethnic identity and sense of peoplehood, they provided a bridge between "ethnic Israel" and "spiritual Israel." Alonso de Cartagena argued that Christianity could serve as a viable ideology in which New Christians could preserve their ethnic group cohesiveness and solidarity in precisely the same manner as Jews had always done. What we have here, in short, is a novel ideology of superficial Christianity that served to rationalize the continuity of Jewish group identity and cohesiveness among the New Christians.

Cartagena correctly saw that Christianity does not ultimately recognize races at all because, at the theoretical or spiritual level, it fosters the unification of all humanity. And he proposed that eventually there would be complete intermingling of races and nations (a notion, I suggest, that served much the same function in his writing as the "withering away of the state" does in classical Marxist political theory).

While anticipating the eventual emergence of a society free from ethnic distinctions, Cartagena contended that because ethnic divisions would persist into the foreseeable future, and because they have no legitimate place in Christian theology, we should do our best to *ignore* them. Thus he did not advocate a program to encourage intermarriage, nor did he condemn the New Christians for their continued group consciousness, their political and economic inter-group cooperation, their consciousness of common descent, or their pride in their Jewish ancestry. Instead, Cartagena attempted to change the traditional outlook and social behavior of non-Jewish Spaniards by urging them to view both themselves and the New Christians as members of one people — even though these different groups were not only disunited but in fact were actively engaged in grim and sometimes violent conflict.

Cartagena's message was that the continuation of the New Christians as an unassimilated, segregated group within Spanish society should be irrelevant from a Christian moral and theological perspective. He even proposed that the categories of New Christian and Old Christian be abandoned altogether, on the theory that eliminating such distinctions would lessen hostility by Old Christians toward New Christians. At the same time, though, Cartagena argued that New Christians should be allowed to maintain their own strong sense of superior group consciousness.



The emblem of the Inquisition: Along with the Christian cross and symbols of mercy (left) and justice (right), is the Inquisition's motto, "Arise, Oh Lord, and judge thine own cause."

The implication is that the New Christians can and should continue to retain their group integrity and even their ethnic uniqueness in order to preserve their distinguished lineage. However, the rest of Christian society ought to view such behavior as theoretically irrelevant and cease even categorizing individuals as New Christians because such racialist thinking is contrary to Christian theology and morality. In other words, Cartagena urged non-Jewish Spaniards to abandon their own sense of group self-awareness, while urging baptized Jews to retain their separate group identity.[35]

Waging Intellectual Warfare

A striking feature of the struggle over the New Christians in 15th-century Spain was that their defenders were intellectually far more sophisticated than their opponents. Collectively they dominated the literature of the period. (This has often been true in other eras as well, such as during the Dreyfus affair in 19th century France, and in the United States today.)[36]

Netanyahu details the distinguished intellectual and political accomplishments of Torquemada and Cartagena prior to their apologetic work, and points out that Díaz was the second or third most powerful official in the government of Castile. Their arguments were presented in a highly literate, scholarly style that commanded respect from educated readers. Moreover, these writers showed great skill in developing intricate, tortured arguments to offset the long-standing anti-Jewish bias inherent in Christian theology. Similar comments could be made about a very large body of pro-Jewish literature directed at non-Jews in more recent historical eras, including our own. Indeed, a good example is Netanyahu's book.

The result of all this intellectual activity was a stunning, if temporary, victory. Writes Netanyahu (p. 658):

> The Marranos were faced with a campaign of vilification which clearly threatened their existence in Spain, and they were inevitably looking for the best method to quash that campaign, or reduce its effectiveness. As long as Toledo was the headquarters and center of the rebels' anti-Marrano agitation, the Marranos met the violent diatribes ... with a counterattack that soon put their enemies on the defensive. Determined to fight fire with fire, the Marranos placed in the forefront of their battle-line the strongest and ablest men they possessed — Torquemada, Cartagena, the Relator [Fernán Díaz], and others; they enlisted in their support men of courage and brilliance, such as Lope de Barrientos and Alonso de Montalvo ...
>
> They built a massive public opinion that was so adverse to Sarmiento [a leader of the anti-Converso revolt] and his followers that the latter came to be regarded as outlaws, not only politically, but also morally and religiously. Within one year after the Toledan outbreak, the Marranos saw their foes in retreat; the Pope had denounced and excommunicated them; their leaders had been executed or hunted down; and Toledo ... was clearly seeking accommodation with the Crown.

In their intellectual struggle, the Conversos recruited prominent and respected Old Christians to defend their cause — a strategy commonly employed by Jews through the ages. (Even in the ancient world there developed an entire apologetic literature written by Jews masquerading as non-Jews.)[37] Similarly, in modern societies Jews have often covertly funded organizations headed by prominent non-Jews that combat anti-Semitism or otherwise promote Jewish interests. Examples of this phenomenon in 20th-century America include the successful campaigns to establish a US trade embargo against Tsarist Russia and to revise American immigration policy to promote maximum racial and cultural pluralism.[38]

As Netanyahu shows, the Conversos recruited several prominent Old Christians to support their cause. Lope de Barrientos, an Old Christian and Bishop of Cuenca, was recruited by the Converso Fernán Díaz to write a tract supporting the Christian orthodoxy of most Conversos and condemning their enemies (p. 612). Actually, this tract was no more than a revision of one that Díaz himself had written. Another Old Christian, the jurist Alonso Díaz de Montalvo, sought help from two prominent New Christian intellectuals in writing a pro-Converso apologetic tract.

So it was that the New Christians engaged in an elaborate, multifaceted strategy to counter and vanquish their enemies. This included polemical writings by Converso intellectuals, recruitment of prominent non-Jewish intellectuals, as well as falsifications and deletions of the historical record by Converso scholars. It also included efforts to persuade the King to deal harshly with anti-Jewish pogromists, and to persuade the Pope to excommunicate the anti-Jewish Toledo rebels of 1449. During the Inquisition era New Christians bribed the Pope and other high officials, and at times were able to infiltrate the Inquisition itself, as part of the effort to soften the effect of its campaign against crypto-Jews. Converso efforts were not confined to the intellectual field. They also included the establishment of para-military urban self-defense organizations, and even assassinations of anti-Converso leaders during periods of armed conflict.

Because of such efforts the New Christians remained a prominent political force in Spain well into the 17th century (even as the Inquisition remained active well into the 18th century). One can only be impressed by their incredible tenacity, as well as that of Jewish historians such as Netanyahu who continue to fight their battles five centuries later.

Furthering a Jewish Historical Outlook

In this regard Netanyahu is of course continuing a long tradition of Jewish intellectual apologetics

From the Middle Ages to the 20th century, violent eruptions of rage against Jews have broken out in Europe. This contemporary print depicts a pogrom in the Frankfurt Jewish quarter, 1614.

that stretches back to the ancient world. Jewish scholar Jacob Katz sees this academic pattern as very much alive in today's world. Jewish Studies Departments in American universities, he finds, are explicitly linked to Jewish nationalism, and they often violate customary standards of scholarly objectivity: "The inhibitions of traditionalism, on the one hand, and a tendency toward apologetics, on the other, can function as deterrents to scholarly objectivity." The work of Jewish historians, says Katz, exhibits "a defensiveness that continues to haunt so much of contemporary Jewish activity."[39]

Another recent book on the Inquisition, José Faur's *In the Shadow of History: Jews and Conversos at the Dawn of Modernity*[40] is even more disgraceful than Netanyahu's in its disregard for the normal scholarly pursuit of truth, pressed into the service of promoting a thoroughly Judeocentric historiography. In the introduction, Faur describes his deep commitment to Judaism and attachment to the Jewish culture of his childhood. "This book is written from the perspective of the 'other'," he writes. "The story of the conversos ... concerns the attempt of the oppressed to break the silence imposed on them by the persecuting society, and transmit the perspective of the persecuted to future generations."

Faur completely rejects "objective" or "scientific" history whose real function has been "to suppress alternative perspectives, particularly the perspective of the victim." He boldly lays out his goal:

> There will be no "Jewish history" without Jewish historians establishing a specific Jewish perspective. Therefore, the rise of a Jewish historical consciousness is indispensable for a particular Jewish history ... Without a historical consciousness the destiny of the Jewish people will remain unfulfilled.

Historiography for Faur is fundamentally subjective. "The most awesome responsibility of the Jewish historian," he writes, "is to validate the authority of Jewish memory." Just as with the 15th-century Converso chroniclers, historians such as Netanyahu, and a very long line of Jewish apologists stretching back into the ancient world, José

Faur sees his intellectual work as dedicated first and foremost to furthering Jewish group interests.

In spite of their unconcealed bias, historians such as Netanyahu and Faur encounter no obstacles in today's world. Their works are published by the most prominent and respectable publishing houses, while revisionist scholars who attempt a more objective perspective on history — one that inevitably conflicts with Jewish self-conceptions and interests — are typically relegated to a sort of intellectual underground, if not driven to oblivion.

An Ancient Conflict

Every healthy society requires a sense of moral and ethical rectitude, even a kind of self-righteousness — and no people has refined this sense more acutely than the Jews.

Beginning with Philo and Josephus in the ancient world, Jewish scholars and religious leaders have developed complex arguments intended to present the Jewish people and Judaism in a positive light. As part of this effort to morally justify the Jewish role in history they often portray Judaism as a morally superior religion, Jews as acting according to high ethical principles, and the Jewish people as, consequently, a moral beacon for the rest of humanity. This "light unto the nations" argument has persisted as a prominent theme of 19th and 20th century Jewish apologia.

Consistent with this, Jewish intellectuals have sought to defend Jewish history and tradition by portraying as immoral all societies and cultures that have been unfriendly to Jews. Especially in recent centuries, Jewish scholars have been at the forefront of efforts to malign and discredit the intellectual, cultural and religious foundations of Western civilization. Referring to this process, British historian Paul Johnson writes of "the sheer destructive power of Jewish rationalism once it escaped the restraints of the traditional community."[41]

Netanyahu is squarely within this tradition. His work seeks to portray Jewish (and Converso) behavior as ethical, and Judaism as moral, while at the same time castigating anti-Jewish societies as fundamentally irrational and malevolent. Thus he censures not merely Spanish culture, but Western civilization — including its religious pillar, Christianity. In the view of Jewish intellectuals such as Netanyahu, the history of the West — beginning with the Roman Empire and the early Christian era, and culminating in Auschwitz — has largely been a chronicle of Jew-hatred, and therefore of almost unrelieved evil.

For their part, non-Jews in widely varying periods and places have regarded Jewish behavior, as well as the fundamentally ethnocentric moral code of Judaism, with loathing and contempt.[42] One finds this from Roman intellectuals in the ancient world, in the spectacular Christian-Jewish "disputations" of the Middle Ages, in repeated condemnations of the Jewish Talmud by Popes and other Christian leaders, and as a prominent strand of 18th- and 19th-century Enlightenment discourse about the Jews (for example, by Kant and Voltaire).

In a world in which Jews and non-Jews are still groping to determine the proper place of Jews in society, Jewish historians such as Netanyahu and Faur take their work very seriously. They regard themselves not as dispassionate scholars in search of historical truth, but as intellectual warriors in a conflict that is being waged for the highest stakes. They believe, correctly, that the very survival of the Jewish people requires ceaseless scholarly defense, even in our "enlightened" age. In this ancient conflict, Netanyahu's book is an important intellectual weapon — massive and sharp, but also double-edged.

Notes

1. Cecil Roth, A *History of the Marranos* (New York: Meridian Books, and, Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1960 [copyright 1932]), p. 20; and, C. Roth, *The Spanish Inquisition* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1937), p. 27; Cecil Roth, born in England in 1899, authored numerous works of Jewish history. He began teaching at Oxford University in 1939.
2. Cecil Roth, A *History of the Marranos* (New York and Philadelphia: 1960), pp. 20, 30, 31.
3. H. Fast, *The Jews: Story of a People* (Dell pb. edition, 1978 [originally: Dial Press: 1968]), pp. 215, 216.
4. F. L. Cross and E. A. Livingstone (eds.), *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church* (Oxford Univ. Press [2nd ed.] 1977), p. 1296.
5. Edward Peters, *Inquisition* (New York: Free Press, 1988); "The Myth of the Spanish Inquisition," a 1995 BBC television documentary that was also broadcast in the USA on the History Channel (A&E cable network), January 17, 1996; Edward O'Brien, "A New Look at the Spanish Inquisition," *The Wanderer* (St. Paul, Minn.), Feb. 15, 1996, p. 10.
6. Cecil Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (New York and Philadelphia: 1960), pp. 1-10; L. Begley, *Wartime Lies* (New York: Knopf, 1991); J. Prinz, *The Secret Jews* (New York: Random House, 1973).
7. D.K. Shipler, "Soviet Jews Found to Retain Identity," *The New York Times*, Feb. 20, 1981. See also Hendrick Smith's book, *The Russians*.
8. H. Beinart, "The Converso Community in 15th Century Spain," in R.D. Barnett (ed.), *The Sephardi Heritage*, Vol. I (New York: Ktav, 1971), pp. 425-456, 457-478; H. Beinart, *Conversos on Trial: The Inquisition in Cuidad Real* (Jerusalem: Magnes Press/ Hebrew Univ., 1981); S. M. Hordes, "The Inquisition and the Crypto-Jewish community in colonial New Spain and New Mexico," in M. E. Perry & A. J. Cruz (eds.), *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1991); M. Lazar, "Scorched parchments and tortured memories: The "Jewishness" of the Anussim (Crypto-Jews)," in M. E. Perry & A. J. Cruz (eds.), *Cultural Encounters: The*

Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World (Berkeley: 1991).

9. See, for example, J. C. Boyajian, *Portuguese Bankers at the Court of Spain 1626-1650* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers Univ. Press. 1983); Y. H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto: Isaac Cardoso: A Study in Seventeenth-Century Marranism and Jewish Apologetics* (New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 1971).
10. Salo W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. XV, "Late Middle Ages and Era of European Expansion," (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America [2nd ed.], 1973), p. 372; S. Haliczer, "The First Holocaust," in S. Haliczer (ed.), (trans. S. Haliczer), *Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe* (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble, 1987).
11. S. M. Hordes, "The Inquisition and the Crypto-Jewish Community ...," in M.E. Perry & A.J. Cruz (eds.), *Cultural Encounters* (Berkeley: 1991), p. 213.
12. S. W. Baron, A *Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. XV (Philadelphia: 1973), pp. 233-234.
13. Y. H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian* Ghetto (New York: 1971), p. 5.
14. C. Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (1960), Epilogue, "The Marranos of Today," and esp. pp. 362-365, 368, 369; In 1990 a community of about 500 clandestine Jews was living in the Portugese town of Belmonte. Source: P. Ames, "Portugal Jews Begin to Shed Secrecy," *Los Angeles Times* (AP article), June 3, 1990; In 1978 the leading Jewish community paper of Britain reported that "there are still villages in Portugal populated by these secret Jews ..." Source: S. Freedland, "The Secret Jews: 1978 Style," *Jewish Chronicle* (London), Feb. 3, 1978, p. 24; See also: H.C. Lea, *History of the Inquisition of Spain*, 4 Vols. (New York: American Scholar Publications, 1906-1907; reprinted in 1966).
15. Cited in S. W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. XV (1973), p. 110.
16. S.W. Baron, *A Social and Religious History of the Jews*, Vol. XV, p. 139; B. Pullan, *The Jews of Europe and the Inquisition of Venice, 1550-1670* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983).
17. Cecil Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (1932 ed.), pp. xxiii-xxiv. Another recent example is José Faur, who writes passionately of the "the glory of Sepharad" (*In the Shadow of History: Jews and Conversos at the Dawn of Modernity*, Albany: State Univ. of New York Press, 1992, p. ix).
18. Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 1985). Kamen continues his highly apologetic work in a review of Netanyahu's book, "The Secret of the Inquisition," *New York Review of Books*, Feb. 1, 1996, pp. 4-6. Indeed, Kamen goes beyond Netanyahu to claim that "to a considerable extent the Inquisition created anti-Semitism, rather than that anti-Semitism created the Inquisition." This is an astonishing assertion in light of the widespread and repeated violence against Jews culminating in the forced conversions of 1391 and against the Conversos from the 1440s until the establishment of the Inquisition in 1480. The clear message from the work of many scholars, including Netanyahu, is that over several centuries the only restraint on intensely violent anti-Jewish and anti-Converso pogroms was the alliance of the Jews, and later the Conversos, with the crown.
19. E. Rivkin, "How Jewish were the New Christians?," in J. Sola-Sole, S.G. Armistead, and Silverman (eds.), *Hispania Judaica: Studies in the History, Language, and Literature of the Jews in the Hispanic World*, Vol. I: History (Barcelona: Puvill-Editor, undated).
20. A. Castro, *The Structure of Spanish History*, trans. E. L. King (Princeton Univ. Press, 1954), pp. 525, 531.
21. Quoted in: W.T. Walsh, *Isabella of Spain: The Last Crusader* (New York: Robert M. McBride and Co. 1930), pp. 202-203.
22. V. Perera, "Burning questions: A monumental reinterpretation of why the Inquisition happened," *The New Yorker*, Nov. 6, 1995, pp. 163-174.
23. David Berger, in his review, "Old & New Christians," *Commentary*, October 1995, p. 56, describes Netanyahu's work as "devoid of nuance" in its unitary portrayal of the New Christians, and as reconstructing "motives and intentions through a series of inferences based on slim evidence."
24. Published in New York in 1966 by the American Academy for Jewish Research. Reissued in 1973.
25. See G. Cohen (Review of *The Marranos of Spain* by B. Netanyahu), *Jewish Social Studies*, Vol. 29, 1967, pp. 178-184. Cohen emphasizes how Netanyahu engages in extremely tendentious interpretations to defend his hypothesis.; See also: Y.H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto* (1971), pp. 21ff.
26. Richard L. Kagan, "Article of Faith?" (review), *The New York Times Book Review*, August 27, 1995, p. 16.
27. See J. Contraras, "Family and patronage: The Judeo-Converso minority in Spain," in M. E. Perry & A. J. Cruz (eds.), *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1991), p. 134; J. Faur, *In the Shadow of History* (1992), p. 41; S. Freund and T. Ruiz, "Jews, Conversos, and the Inquisition in Spain, 1391-1492," in M. Perry & F. M. Schweitzer (eds.) *Jewish-Christian Encounters over the Centuries* (New York: Peter Lang, 1994), p. 178; S. Haliczer, *Inquisition and Society in the Kingdom of Valencia 1478-1834* (Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 1990), p. 212ff; R. Kagan, "Article of faith," *The New York Times Book Review*, August 27, 1995, p. 16.
28. D. Berger, "Old & New Christians," *Commentary*, 100(4), October 1995, p. 56.
29. H. Fast, *The Jews: Story of a People* (Dell pb. edition, 1978 [originally: Dial Press: 1968]), pp. 218-219; See also: Yirmiyahu Yovel, *Spinoza and Other Heretics* (Princeton Univ. Press, 1989), Chaps. 1-4.
30. J. Contraras, "Family and patronage" and J. Contraras, "Alderman and Judaizers: Cryptojudaism, Counter-Reformation, and local power," both in A.J. Cruz & M.E. Perry (eds.), *Culture and Control in Counter-Reformation Spain* (Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 1992; S. M. Hordes, "The Inquisition ...," in M.E. Perry & A.J. Cruz (eds.), *Cultural Encounters* (Berkeley: 1991); Y.H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto* (1971), p. 18.
31. C. Roth, A *History of the Marranos* (New York and Philadelphia: 1960), p. 21.
32. C. Roth, *A History of the Marranos* (1960), p. 31.
33. Y.H. Yerushalmi, *From Spanish Court to Italian Ghetto* (1971), p. 48.
34. One finds similar arguments in the literature of today's "Jews for Jesus" movement.
35. Parallels with our own time are obvious. During the past century, Marxist and liberal thinkers have worked hard to persuade lawmakers and the public that race and ethnicity should not be regarded as socially relevant — even though they have played an important role in the real day to day

lives of people. Or consider those Jewish leaders of today who urge non-Jews to abandon their sense of ethnic, racial, religious and cultural identity, while at the same time encouraging Jews vigilantly to maintain their own distinctive ethnic-religious group identity.

36. Albert S. Lindemann, *The Jew Accused: Three Anti-Semitic Affairs (Dreyfus, Beilis, Frank) 1894-1915* (New York: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1991); See also: Wilmot Robertson, *The Dispossessed Majority* (Cape Canavaral, Fla.: Howard Allen, 1981).
37. E. Schürer, *The History of the Jewish People in the Age of Jesus Christ (175 B.C.-A.D. 135)*, Vol. III (Revised and edited by G. Vermes, F. Millar, & M. Goodman. Originally published in 1885. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1986), pp. 617ff.
38. N.W. Cohen, *Not Free to Desist: The American Jewish Committee 1906-1966* (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society of America, 1972); S. M. Neuringer, *American Jewry and United States Immigration Policy 1881-1953* (New York: Arno, 1980; Nathan C. Belth, *A Promise to Keep: A Narrative of the American Encounter with Anti-Semitism* (New York: Times Books/ *The New York Times* [copyright: Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith], 1979), pp. 173, 175; Also valuable is: Alfred M. Lilienthal, *The Zionist Connection* (New York: 1978).
39. Jacob Katz, *Jewish Emancipation and Self-Emancipation* (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society of America, 1986), pp. 84, 85.
40. J. Faur, *In the Shadow of History* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1992). The quotations from Faur's book are from pages 8 (italics in text), 183, 184 and 210.
41. P. Johnson, *A History of the Jews* (New York: Perennial Library, 1988 [Originally published by Harper and Row, 1987]), pp. 291-292.
42. See the remarkable book by Israeli scholar Israel Shahak, *Jewish Religion, Jewish History: The Weight of Three Thousand Years* (Boulder, Colorado: Pluto Press, 1994).

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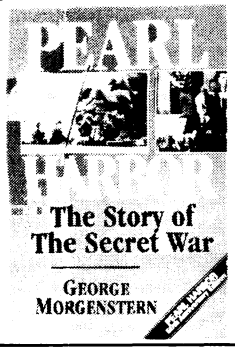

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Exchanging Views on the Holocaust

Debating the Undebatable: The Weber-Shermer Clash

For several years now, Jewish organizations have said that to debate those who dispute the Six Million story gives legitimacy to a view that is beyond the bounds of decent public discourse, and provides a forum for "hate." Deborah Lipstadt, author of *Denying the Holocaust*, insists that there is not and cannot be a debate on the Holocaust. In a few countries, including France and Germany, those who express dissident views on this issue are treated as criminals.

Actually, there have already been a few scattered Holocaust debates. For several hours in April 1979, French professor Robert Faurisson defended his revisionist views against challenge by several "exterminationist" historians on Italian-language Swiss television. That same year the Italian history journal *Storia Illustrata* opened its pages to both Faurisson and anti-revisionist scholars to present their conflicting arguments. (See R. Faurisson, "The Gas Chambers: Truth or Lie?," Winter 1981 *Journal*, pp. 319-373.)

Although nothing on this scale has so far been possible in the United States, on Saturday afternoon, July 22, 1995, a strong beam of light pierced the prevailing blackout when two scholars squared off in a debate at a hotel in Costa Mesa, California. Michael Shermer, history of science associate professor at Occidental College, and editor-publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, matched wits for two hours with Mark Weber, Director of the Institute for Historical Review, and editor of its *Journal of Historical Review*. Greg Raven, *Journal* associate editor, served as MC for the event, which was sponsored by the Institute for Historical Review, and introduced the two participants. Each speaker delivered a 30-minute opening presentation, followed by a 20-minute rebuttal. A question and answer period concluded the event. (A videotape of this debate is available from the IHR for $19.95, plus tax and shipping.)

Changing Holocaust Story

In his opening presentation, Weber explained precisely what revisionists say, and do not say, about the Holocaust issue. He stressed that the Holocaust story has changed drastically over the years. What we are told today is quite different than the story given at the great Nuremberg trial of 1945-46. Weber continued:

> Many extermination claims that were once widely accepted have been quietly dropped in recent years. For example, the great Nuremberg Trial of 1945-1946 supposedly proved that the Germans systematically killed people in gas chambers at Dachau, Buchenwald and other concentration camps in Germany proper. That part of the extermination story proved so untenable that it was abandoned more than twenty years ago.

As Weber pointed out, no serious historian now supports the once supposedly proven stories of "extermination camps" in the territory of the old German Reich. Even Simon Wiesenthal, the well-known "Nazi hunter," acknowledged in 1975 and again in 1993 that, "there were no extermination camps on German soil."

These days, said Weber, prominent Holocaust historians maintain that large numbers of Jews were gassed at just six camps in what is now Poland: Auschwitz (including Birkenau), Majdanek, Treblinka, Sobibor, Chelmno and Belzec. However, Weber said, the so-called "evidence" presented for gassings at these six camps is not qualitatively different than the now-discredited so-called "evidence" for alleged gassings at the camps in Germany.

At the great Nuremberg trial, Weber pointed out, the Allies charged that the Germans had murdered one and a half million people in the Majdanek camp alone. In the decades that followed, this charge was widely repeated. Today no one believes it.

Cornerstone Auschwitz

Weber and Shermer each devoted considerable attention to the alleged gas chambers at Auschwitz, and especially Auschwitz-Birkenau, the cornerstone of the Holocaust story. At the Nuremberg Tribunal, and for decades afterwards, it was universally alleged that the Germans killed four

million prisoners at Auschwitz alone. In recent years, Weber pointed out, this figure has been drastically revised downwards. For example, prominent French Holocaust historian Jean-Claude Pressac has recently estimated that 775,000 persons, of whom 630,000 were Jews, perished at Auschwitz. While even such lower figures are incorrect, said Weber, they show how the Auschwitz story has changed drastically over the years.

Blame for the wildly exaggerated four million figure is today pinned in the Poles or the Soviets. "What is routinely suppressed," said Weber, is the fact that the four million Auschwitz figure was not only promoted by the Soviets, but officially endorsed by the United States and Britain, notably at the Nuremberg Tribunal, and was widely and uncritically repeated in the American media and major reference works.

One document that is constantly cited as key evidence for the Holocaust extermination story, said Weber, is the postwar "confession" of Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss. In his statement of April 5, 1946, which was submitted by the US prosecution at the main Nuremberg trial, Höss supposedly "confessed" to killing two and half million people at Auschwitz between 1940 and December 1943. (He claimed that another half million succumbed to starvation and disease during this period.)

But if far fewer than two million died at Auschwitz, as is now officially conceded in Israel and Poland, the Höss "confession" is implicitly fraudulent. In fact, said Weber, we now know that this "confession," as well as Höss' Nuremberg trial testimony, are not only demonstrably false on crucial points, but were obtained by torture. (See: Rupert Butler, *Legions of Death* [England: 1983], pp. 235ff.; R. Faurisson, "How the British Obtained the Confessions of Rudolf Höss," Winter 1986-87 *Journal*, pp. 389-403.)

In spite of the drastic downward revisions in the once supposedly authoritative death tolls for Auschwitz and Majdanek, said Weber, no non-Revisionist historian has yet had the courage to draw the "rather obvious conclusion that the legendary six million figure cannot possibly be correct." For the time being, anyway, it is still treated with reverence.

Weber cited detailed aerial photographs of Auschwitz taken by Allied reconnaissance aircraft on several random days in 1944, during the height of the alleged extermination period there. These photographs, which were first made public in 1979, "show no trace of piles of corpses, smoking crematory chimneys or masses of Jews awaiting death," all of which have been alleged, and which would have been visible if Auschwitz had indeed been the

Message of Greeting

This message from Robert Faurisson was read at the Weber-Shermer meeting by MC Greg Raven:

I greet you from France, and wish you success in your meeting today. I wish I could be with you.

I would enjoy participating in a public debate with Dr. Shermer. I would ask him to publish in his magazine the text of "My comment on an open letter from Michael Shermer (of March 31, 1995)," and, now that he has returned from his visit to sites of wartime camps in Poland and Germany, I would repeat to him my challenge: "Show me or draw me a Nazi gas chamber!"

You in America and we in France, along with friends in many other countries, are working together in a great worldwide struggle against historical lies, intellectual tyranny and terror. Many of us, because of our revisionist views, have lost jobs, received heavy fines, been sent to jail, or have been severely assaulted, especially in France, Germany and Austria.

Last month a court in Paris found me guilty of violating, once again, our country's five-year-old "Fabius-Gayssot" law against Holocaust revisionism, which makes it illegal to dispute crimes against humanity as defined by the Nuremberg Tribunal.

On June 13, this Paris court ordered Henri Roques and me to pay 29,000 francs, about $6,000, because of my book, *Réponse à Jean-Claude Pressac sur le problème des chambres à gaz*. I regard this sentence as an honor.

For this trial we subpoenaed Pressac. He suffered a major disaster in court. He was unable to provide the three judges with even one proof of the existence of even one gas chamber in Auschwitz. It is undoubtedly thanks to this Pressac disaster that we received such an unusually mild sentence. [See: "French Court Fines Faurisson, Roques for 'Holocaust Denial' Book" in the Nov.-Dec. 1995 *Journal*, pp. 13-17.]

The fact that our enemies must resort to bigoted boycott campaigns, criminal laws and physical violence shows their fear and desperation, and that they are not confident of their views.

In this international struggle, the Institute for Historical Review has been playing a critically important role for more than 15 years. The Institute has a record without parallel, and is a keystone of our global coalition. It must continue its vital work.

Right now, at a time when our Institute is facing serious financial difficulties, I urge you to support it with your generous donation.

infamous extermination center it is said to have been.

Forensic Examinations

Weber spoke about the various expert reports and on-site forensic examinations that have been made of the alleged extermination gas chambers, especially at Auschwitz-Birkenau. He spoke first about Fred Leuchter and his February 1988 on-site investigation at Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek. In sworn testimony in the 1988 Toronto trial of Ernst Zündel, and in a technical report, Leuchter described every aspect of his investigations. Presenting photos of the facilities, plans, charts and scientific data, he explained his startling conclusion that the "gas chamber" story is absurd and physically impossible. It is worth noting that at the time Leuchter was widely acknowledged as America's foremost execution hardware specialist. (See the Winter 1992-93 *Journal*, pp. 421-428, 485-492.)

Leuchter's findings have been authoritatively corroborated by a major Polish research center, Weber continued. They prompted the Auschwitz State Museum, an agency of the Polish government, to commission the Institute of Forensic Research in Krakow to conduct a similar forensic investigation. In a confidential report dated September 24, 1990, the Krakow Institute confirmed that its own findings very closely match those of the American gas chamber specialist. (See the Summer 1991 *Journal*, pp. 207-216.)

Dr. William Lindsey, an American research chemist employed for 33 years by the Dupont Corporation, likewise personally inspected the so-called gas chambers, said Weber. In a 1985 court case Lindsey testified under oath that the Auschwitz gassing story is physically impossible. Based on his careful examination of the alleged gas chambers at Auschwitz, Birkenau and Majdanek, and on his years of experience, he declared: "I have come to the conclusion that no one was willfully or purposefully killed with Zyklon B [hydrogen cyanide] in this manner. I consider it absolutely impossible."

Similarly, said Weber, a leading Austrian engineer, Walter Lüftl, declared in March 1992 that the stories of mass extermination of Jews in gas chambers at Auschwitz and Mauthausen are "technically impossible." Lüftl, a court-recognized engineer, heads a large engineering firm in Vienna. At the time his report was made public, he was president of the Austrian Engineers Chamber, a four thousand member professional association. (See the Winter 1992-93 *Journal*, pp. 391-420.)

German chemist Germar Rudolf similarly published a detailed report on the supposed gas chambers of Auschwitz, including Birkenau. His 1993 report, Weber said, is based on an on-site investigation, chemical analysis of samples, and meticulous research. Rudolf, a certified chemist and doctoral candidate, worked at the renowned Max Planck Institut research center in Stuttgart. "For chemical-physical reasons," Rudolf concluded, "the claimed mass gassings with hydrocyanic acid in the alleged 'gas chambers' in Auschwitz did not take place ... The supposed facilities for mass killing in Auschwitz and Birkenau were not suitable for this purpose."

Michael Shermer, editor-publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, addresses the IHR-sponsored meeting.

'Steam Chambers' and 'Jewish Soap'

At one time, Weber pointed out, it was seriously claimed that the Germans exterminated Jews with electricity and steam, and that they manufactured soap from Jewish corpses. At Nuremberg, he went on, the United States charged that the Germans killed Jews at Treblinka, not in gas chambers, as is now claimed, but by steaming them to death in so-called "steam chambers." These bizarre stories have also been quietly abandoned in recent years. (See "Treblinka," Summer 1992 *Journal*, pp. 133-158.)

In April 1990, Israeli historians conceded that the Germans did not manufacture bars of soap from

Enlargement of an Allied aerial reconnaissance photo of Auschwitz-Birkenau, taken on August 25, 1944. It shows no trace of piles of corpses, smoking crematory chimneys or masses of Jews awaiting death. A large blow-up of this photograph was displayed at the Weber-Shermer debate.

the bodies of murdered Jews — contrary to what had been alleged for years in countless periodicals and supposedly authoritative history texts. If this story is not true, one might reasonably ask, how then did it ever get started? Israeli historian Yehuda Bauer had a ready answer. He charged that the *Nazis* invented it. In fact, said Weber, this particular fable was first widely circulated in 1942 by the World Jewish Congress, and especially by its president, Rabbi Stephen S. Wise.

Anne Frank

The Holocaust extermination story is superficially plausible, said Weber. Everyone has seen the horrific photos of dead and dying inmates taken at Bergen-Belsen, Nordhausen and other concentration camps when they were liberated by British and American forces in the final weeks of the war in Europe. These people were unfortunate victims, said Weber, not of an extermination program, but of disease and malnutrition brought on by the complete collapse of Germany in the final months of the war. In fact, he said, if there had been an extermination program, the Jews found by Allied forces at the end of the war would have long since been killed.

Perhaps the best known "Holocaust victim" has been Anne Frank, whose name is known around the world for her famous diary. Her fate, said Weber, is typical of many Jews who lost their lives in German camps during the war. The 15-year-old girl and her father, Otto Frank, were deported from the Netherlands to Auschwitz in September 1944. Several weeks later, in the face of the advancing Soviet army, Anne was evacuated along with many other Jews to the Bergen-Belsen camp, where she died of

typhus in March 1945.

Her father came down with typhus in Auschwitz and was sent to the camp hospital to recover. He was one of thousands of sick and feeble Jews who were left behind when the Germans abandoned the camp in January 1945, shortly before it was overrun by the Soviets. He died in Switzerland in 1980. If the German policy had been to kill Anne Frank, neither she, nor her father and sister (along with many other Jews), would not have "survived" Auschwitz. "As tragic as it was," said Weber, "their fate cannot be reconciled with the extermination story."

Himmler's Order to the Camps

At the end of the Second World War, Weber said, the Allies confiscated a tremendous quantity of German documents dealing with Germany's wartime Jewish policy, which was sometimes referred to as the "final solution." "But not a single German document has ever been found that orders or even refers to an extermination program," he emphasized. "To the contrary, the documents clearly show that the German 'final solution' policy was one of emigration and deportation, not extermination."

Moreover, said Weber, there "is no documentary evidence that Adolf Hitler ever gave an order to exterminate the Jews, or that he knew of any extermination program." Instead, Weber continued, "the record shows that the German leader wanted the Jews to leave Europe, by emigration if possible and by deportation if necessary."

Contrary to the popular propaganda image, the wartime German authorities were concerned about the high death rate in the concentration camps due to disease, and took measures to prevent deaths among the inmates. In this regard, Weber quoted from a directive dated December 28, 1942, from the head of the SS camp administration office to all the German concentration camps, including Auschwitz. It sharply criticized the high death rate of inmates due to disease, and ordered that "camp physicians must use all means at their disposal to significantly reduce the death rate in the various camps." Furthermore, it ordered: "The camp doctors must supervise more often than in the past the nutrition of the prisoners and, in cooperation with the administration, submit improvement recommendations to the camp commandants ..." Finally, the directive stressed, "The Reichsführer SS [Himmler] has ordered that the death rate absolutely must be reduced."

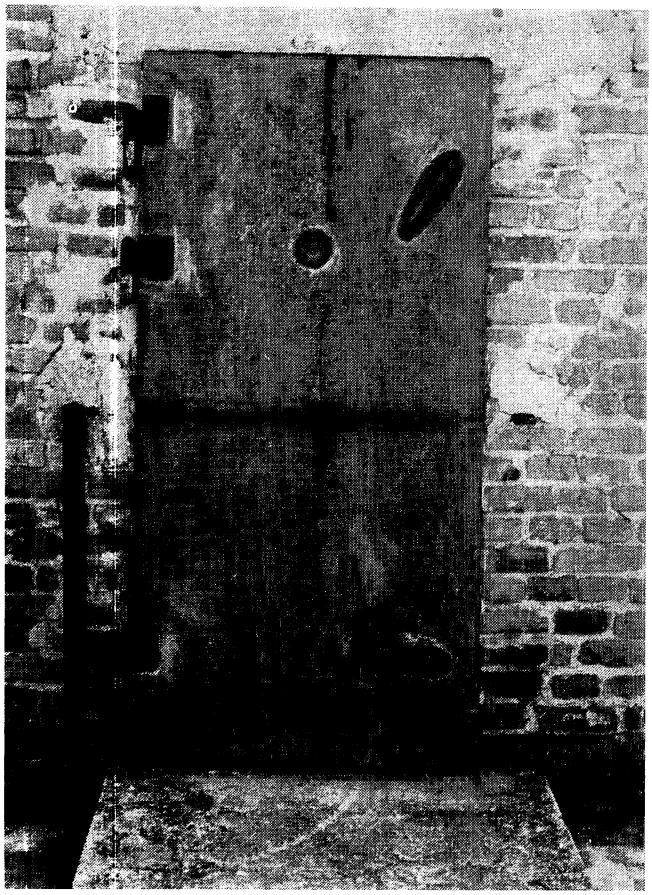
'Survivor Testimony'

Holocaust historians rely heavily on so-called "survivor testimony," to support the extermination story. But such "evidence," Weber said, is notoriously unreliable. He cited an article by Jewish historian Samuel Gringauz, himself a "survivor" (*Jewish Social Studies*, Jan. 1950). "Most of the memoirs and reports" of "survivors," Gringauz pointed out, "are full of preposterous verbosity, graphomanic exaggeration, dramatic effects, overestimated self-inflation, dilettante philosophizing, would-be lyricism, unchecked rumors, bias, partisan attacks and apologies."

Mark Weber, director of the Institute for Historical Review, makes a point during the IHR-sponsored Holocaust debate. He responds to claims made in *The Record*, a mass-circulation ADL publication.

In addition, Weber continued, more than ten thousand of the twenty thousand so-called "testimonies" of Jewish "survivors" on file at the Yad Vashem Holocaust center in Israel are also unreliable, according to a front page article that appeared in the *Jerusalem Post* newspaper of August 17th, 1986. The report quotes Shmuel Krakowski, the archives director of the Israeli government's Holocaust memorial center, who declared that "over half of the 20,000 testimonies from Holocaust survivors on record at Yad Vashem are 'unreliable'."

As a fairly typical example of "eyewitness" gas chamber evidence, Weber quoted from the sworn statement of Regina Bialek, a former Auschwitz prisoner who supposedly survived a "gassing." (See



A casting of this "gas chamber" door from the Majdanek camp in Poland is on display at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. French Holocaust researcher Jean-Claude Pressac has conceded that this "gas chamber" is a fraud. (See the Sept.-Oct. 1993 *Journal*, p. 39.)

her statement on page 32). Calling this first-person account "absurd" and "ludicrous," Weber pointed out that her description of a "gassing" is one that no serious historian today would credit.

ADL Disinformation

Weber took several minutes to deal with claims presented in one of the most widely distributed pieces of Holocaust propaganda. He held up a copy of *The Record: The Holocaust in History*, a publication of the Zionist Anti-Defamation League of B'nai B'rith that purports to be a reliable account of how Europe's Jews were treated between 1933 and 1945.

According to *The Record*, said Weber, no less two million Jews were killed at Treblinka alone. But it does not claim that the victims were shot or gassed, which is the generally accepted story these days, but maintains instead that they were steamed to death — a story no reputable historian now accepts. Another item, Weber continued, tells readers about mass killings at the Belzec camp. Citing an "eyewitness account," *The Record* reports that Jews were put to death there, not by gassing, but by *electrocuting* them in a special hydraulic electrocution device. This is yet another discredited propaganda fable.

This ADL publication also includes a photograph of a door with a sinister skull and crossbones emblem, and the words in German: "Caution! Gas! Mortal Danger! Do Not Open!" Underneath this photo a caption tells readers: "Door of a gas chamber, typical of ones through which millions of Jews passed to their deaths." In fact, said Weber, this photograph actually shows the door of a non-homidical gas chamber at Dachau used to kill lice in clothing. It was never used to kill people. At Auschwitz, the ADL *Record* goes on to report, "more than four million persons were systematically slaughtered." As Weber had already mentioned, this is another once authoritatively accepted claim that has been consigned to the trash heap of history.

'Holocaustomania'

"Even after more than forty years," said Weber, "the vast Holocaust campaign shows no sign of diminishing, but instead seems to grow more intense with each passing year." He continued: "This relentless media campaign, which Jewish-American historian Alfred Lilienthal appropriately calls 'Holocaustomania,' portrays the fate of the Jews during the Second World War as the central event of history."

Non-Jewish victims just do not merit the same concern, said Weber. "For example, there are no American memorials, 'study centers,' or annual observances for the victims of Soviet dictator Joseph Stalin, even though it is well established that Stalin's victims vastly outnumber Hitler's ... The Holocaust has become both a flourishing business and even a kind of new religion for many Jews."

While we are endlessly told that the Germans murdered six million European Jews during the Second World War, said Weber, the public is kept largely ignorant of the conflict's non-Jewish victims. Weber continued:

> If you ask an average, reasonably educated American: "How many European Jews were killed by the Nazis during World War II?," the almost automatic answer is, of course, six million. But if you ask that same person: How many *Americans* lost their lives in the Second World War, or, for that matter, how many British, or Chinese, or Germans, died, the response is usually an admission of ignorance.

According to the *Encyclopaedia Britannica*, Weber noted, some 20 million Chinese civilian perished in World War II, while according to the Chi-

nese government, 35 million Chinese lost their lives as a result of Japanese aggression. "How many Americans know or care about these Asian victims of the Second World War?," Weber asked.

Shermer's 'Convergence of Evidence'

As Michael Shermer came to the podium the audience greeted him with a round of applause. The Holocaust is obviously a very emotional issue, he told the gathering, "if not the most emotional event in modern history." All the same, he went on, as a "civil libertarian" he entirely agrees that the principle of free speech should also protect dissident views about the Holocaust. As it happens, he had just returned from Europe, where he inspected the sites of the wartime German concentration camps of Auschwitz, Majdanek, Mauthausen and Dachau.

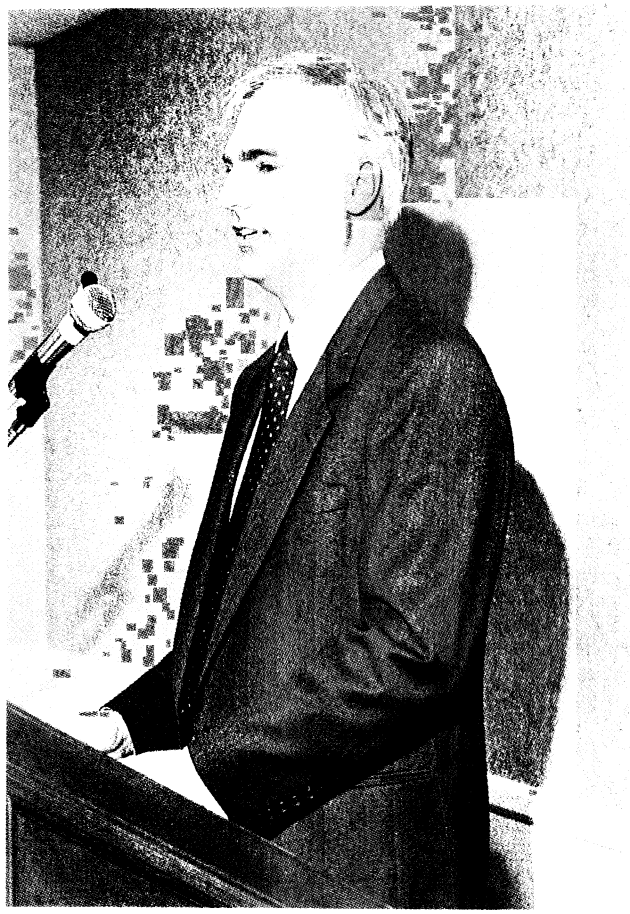
He sought to discredit Holocaust revisionists (and their arguments) by comparing them with anti-Darwinian "creationists." He rejected as specious Robert Faurisson's often-repeated demand for "one proof, just one proof" of a wartime German homicidal gas chamber. "He's not going to get 'one proof'," said Shermer, "because there isn't 'one proof' of a gas chamber." Faurisson's call is like the creationist demand for "just one fossil" proving evolution. "Evolution is not proved by one fossil," Shermer said.

"We are very confident of the sequence of historical events in evolution and in the Holocaust," he continued. "The Holocaust, as it is generally accepted, happened," said Shermer. Evidence for the extermination of six million Jews, many of them in gas chambers, is "constantly fine tuned and changed." "While there may be problems with bits and pieces of the story," said Shermer, "we have to look at the big picture." What proves "the Holocaust," he said, is a "convergence of evidence" or a "consilience of inductions."

"Did the Nazis intend to exterminate European Jews?," Shermer asked. He responded to his own query by saying that this question is too simple. "The Holocaust is not a single event that occurred at one time," he said, but rather a collection of events. Rather than an over-arching plan or program, the "Holocaust evolved over time."

Incriminating Statements?

Perhaps the most impressive evidence presented by Shermer to prove a German extermination policy were several wartime statements by high-ranking Third Reich officials. These included excerpts from the "service journal" of Hans Frank, governor of German-ruled Poland, passages from the diary of propaganda minister Joseph Goebbels, and a portion of SS chief Heinrich Himmler's well-known October 1943 Posen speech. (Shermer had already published these in the June 1994 "pseudohistory" issue of his *Skeptic* magazine, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 44-54.)



Greg Raven, *Journal* associate editor, introduces the speakers at the Weber-Shermer Holocaust debate.

In spite of what Weber had said earlier about it, Shermer also cited the postwar testimony of former Auschwitz commandant Rudolf Höss as important evidence of a German extermination program. Shermer offered no response to the specific points made by Weber about this, except to say that Höss' testimony "has some funky things surrounding it," and that Höss' figures may be "way off." Shermer also compared Höss' postwar testimony with that of Perry Broad and camp physician Dr. Johann Paul Kremer. (On this, see: R. Faurisson "Confessions of SS Men who were at Auschwitz," Summer 1981 *Journal*, pp. 103-136.)

Holding up a copy of the 1994 anthology, *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp*, Shermer recommended this work and specifically endorsed the contribution there of Canadian architect Robert-Jan van Pelt. Quoting van Pelt, Shermer said that "Auschwitz has become a myth ... Few events can

Weber holds up a copy of *The Record: The Holocaust in History*, a mass-circulation publication of the Zionist "Anti-Defamation League."

rival the mythic power of Auschwitz."

Auschwitz, said Shermer, was "never intended, he [Van Pelt] proves, to be an extermination camp." Rather, it "evolved" into a killing center. Holocaust historians such as Pressac and van Pelt now contend that the supposed "gas chambers" at Kremas II and III were originally planned and constructed as normal morgues (*Leichenkeller*). Only later, they assert, were these rooms transformed into killing facilities.

Weber Responds

Weber stressed that while Shermer readily acknowledges that much of what we have been told about the Holocaust over the years is not true, and that many specific Holocaust claims are now demonstrably false, he entirely ignores the implications of this drastic revision of the historical record. Piles of once supposedly solid "evidence" are now acknowledged to be fraudulent, numerous "eyewitness" testimonies and "official" reports are now conceded to be worthless. But this is of more than academic significance. Many lives have been ruined because of such once supposedly "proven" Holocaust claims. Shermer ignored numerous specific points made by Weber, and was vague about precisely when and where Jews were supposedly gassed, even at Auschwitz.

Shermer's "convergence of evidence" thesis is fundamentally flawed, Weber went on, because it can readily be used to "prove" claims, such as gassings at Dachau, that are now universally regarded as untrue. Indeed, the evidence presented at Nuremberg for (mythical) gassings at Dachau, said Weber, is in some ways stronger than the evidence presented there for gassings at Auschwitz. To "prove" gassings at Dachau, Nuremberg prosecutors were at least able to point to the "gas chamber" itself, cite an official US congressional investigative report, and quote "eyewitness" testimony by former camp physician Dr. Franz Blaha.

The story of gassings at the Auschwitz I main camp has also changed, Weber pointed out. For years a room there was shown off to tourists as a homicidal "gas chamber" in its "original state." Now it is acknowledged to be a postwar "reconstruction." Claims of gassings there are played down ever more. Weber cited a recent issue of the French magazine *L'Express*, which reports that "everything" about this gas chamber "is false." (See: "Major French Magazine Acknowledges Auschwitz Gas Chamber Fraud," Jan.-Feb. 1995 *Journal*, pp. 23-24.)

Responding to Shermer's citation of wartime statements of Hans Frank, Weber pointed out that at the end of the war the former Governor General of Poland had turned over to the Allies his own detailed "service journal" (*Diensttagebuch*), confident that it would exonerate him. Moreover, Weber went on, Frank testified at Nuremberg that he did not know of any wartime German program or policy to exterminate Europe's Jews. (Testimony of April 18, 1946. IMT "blue series," vol. 12, pp. 17-19. See also: M. Weber, "The Nuremberg Trials and the Holocaust," Summer 1992 *Journal*, p. 195.)

Frank explained to the Tribunal that he had been very concerned over persistent reports that Jews were being exterminated. He said that on one occasion, when a report reached him about killings of Jews at Belzec, he went to the site the next day. He spoke with Jews who were working there, and was unable to find evidence of killings.

On another occasion, in February 1944, he raised this matter in a conversation with Hitler. "My Führer, rumors about the extermination of the Jews will not be silenced. They are heard everywhere ... Tell me, my Führer, is there anything to it?" As Frank related, Hitler replied: "You can very well imagine that there are executions going on — of insurgents. Apart from that I do not know anything. Why don't you speak to Heinrich Himmler about it?" Himmler denied the extermination allegations, Frank said. (Incidentally, the statements by Frank, Goebbels and Himmler cited by Shermer were all dealt with in detail during the 1988 Zündel trial, particularly by prosecution witness Christopher Browning, defense attorney Doug Christie, and defense witnesses Faurisson, Irving and Weber. See: B. Kulaszka, ed., *Did Six Million Really Die?*

[Toronto: 1992], esp. pp. 93, 113-116, 130, 131, 208, 302, 336, 343-344, 369, 396, 405-409, 417.)

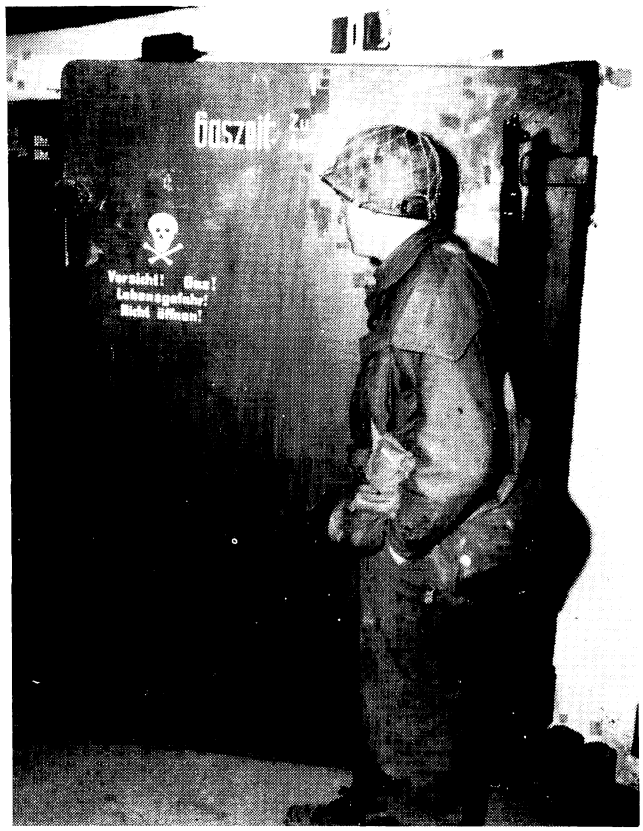
While conceding that many specific Holocaust claims are now known to be demonstrably untrue, Shermer does not hold anyone responsible for these falsehoods. In his 1994 *Skeptic* essay, he manifests a double standard: while quick to point to real or imagined errors of fact or interpretation by revisionists, he passes over in silence the numerous demonstrable historical falsehoods promoted by such groups as the ADL. In his *Skeptic* essay Shermer casts aspersions on the allegedly sinister motives of revisionists, while treating anti-revisionists as high-minded scholars of good will. In short, he questions the motives only of critics of the Holocaust story.

Weber cited a recent letter by Michael Berenbaum, research director of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum. From Australia came this question: "Why don't you have homicidal gas chambers and/or some crematorium ovens on display in your large museum?" Berenbaum responded: "We do have crematoria ovens in the Museum. We could not bring over gas chambers because there was no original that was available for us to bring to the United States. Instead we made a model of the crematoria and labelled it a model." This is a remarkable statement, because until very recently, anyway, it was asserted that "original" homicidal gas chambers existed at Auschwitz, Mauthausen and Majdanek. (Berenbaum letter of April 21, 1995. *Adelaide Institute* newsletter, May 1995, pp. 5-6.)

Although claims of gassings at the Mauthausen camp have been played down in recent decades, it should not be forgotten that this was once authoritatively regarded as one of the most terrible German killing centers. As an example, Weber noted that, according to the 1957 edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (vol. 10, p. 288), "close to two million people, mostly Jews, were exterminated between 1941 and 1945" in Mauthausen.

Referring to the mentality behind the seemingly ceaseless Holocaust campaign, Weber cited a statement by Abraham Foxman, national director of the Zionist Anti-Defamation League. (ADL *On the Frontline* newsletter, Jan. 1994, p. 2.) "The Holocaust," Foxman declared,

> is a singular event. It is not simply one example of genocide but a near successful attempt on the life of God's chosen children and thus, on God himself.
>
> It is an event that is the antithesis of Creation as recorded in the Bible; and like its direct opposite, which is relived weekly with the Sabbath and yearly with the Torah, it must be remembered from generation to generation.



Dachau "gas chamber" door. This official US Army photo was taken at Dachau on April 30, 1945, one day after the camp's liberation. It shows a GI standing in front of a door marked with a skull and crossbones. According to the official caption, "these chambers were used by the Nazi guards for killing prisoners of the infamous Dachau concentration camp." In fact, this is a small disinfection gas chamber used for delousing clothes, as part of the routine to curtail the spread of disease. This chamber was never used to kill people. For several decades, this photo has been widely reproduced to help keep alive the notorious Dachau "gas chamber" myth. A large blow-up of this photograph was on display at the Weber-Shermer debate.

While Shermer has described this Foxman statement merely as "an unfortunate choice of words" (*Skeptic*, June 1994, p. 33), it is actually "fortuitous," said Weber, because "it is refreshingly reveals the arrogant and bigoted mind-set of the ADL and, indeed, of much of the entire Holocaust campaign." He continued:

> When such people say "Never Forget," they mean never: at no time, and until the end of time. Five years, twenty years, a hundred years from now, we will still be enduring a steady drumbeat of what is euphemistically

called "Holocaust education" ... This mentality helps explain why the Holocaust plays the quasi-religious role it does in our society.

As evidence both of the mentality of our adversaries, and of the progress that has been made in recent years. Weber cited the public declaration issued in February 1979 by 34 French scholars. "The question of how technically such a mass murder was possible should not be raised," they stated. "It was technically possible because it occurred.... There is not nor can there be a debate over the existence of the gas chambers." Today, and largely in response to revisionist skepticism, individuals such van Pelt, Pressac and Shermer are earnestly investigating precisely this "question of how technically such a mass murder was possible."

Shermer Responds

When Shermer returned to the podium, he affirmed that it is "obviously" proper to ask such questions, adding that his own research shows that he rejects the 1979 French scholars' statement. During his recent visit to Europe, he asked numerous questions of officials at former camp sites in an effort to learn just how the "gas chambers" are supposed to have functioned.

During his visit to Mauthausen, Shermer said, officials there responded to his specific questions about the camp "gas chamber" with inadequate or contradictory explanations. He also conceded that there are problems with this facility. For one thing, the chamber's "doors don't lock." Shermer expressed the belief that homicidal gassings were conducted at Mauthausen "at most on a small scale and experimentally."

The Dachau "gas chamber" is a "non-issue," said Shermer, because no one now claims that anyone was ever gassed there. Surprisingly, though, he went on to give a few reasons why he thinks prisoners may indeed have been gassed there.

Bogus Majdanek Chamber

At the former Majdanek camp (near Lublin, Poland), Shermer said, he inspected a building that is shown off to tourists as a wartime killing facility, with a "big sign" identifying it as a homicidal gas chamber. This "reconstructed" chamber, he said, "makes no sense." Shermer said that he is "certain" that it was "not a homicidal gas chamber." He speculated that it might have been a non-homicidal delousing facility. (Such non-homicidal gas chambers, common in German camps, were installed to prevent deaths. They used Zyklon B, with poisonous hydrocyanic gas, to kill typhus-bearing lice in clothing.) Shermer ascribed the misrepresentation of this building to the "unprofessional" character of the staff there. "I suspect at Majdanek [that] if there were homicidal gassings, it was done on a small scale," he continued, albeit at other locations in the camp. He made no effort to defend the claim that one and half million people were killed at Majdanek.

Shermer also found problems with the "gas chambers" at Auschwitz. As he noted, it is frequently and authoritatively alleged that Zyklon B was dumped into Auschwitz-Birkenau "gas chambers" (at Kremas II and II) through ceiling-floor "wire mesh columns." However, Shermer said he was unable to find any on-site trace of these columns. "I am skeptical" of the wire mesh columns story, he said.

Eyewitness 'Testimony' of an Auschwitz Gas Chamber Survivor

On 25th December 1943, I was sick with typhus and was picked out at a selection made by doctors Mengele and Tauber along with about 350 other women. I was made to undress and taken by lorry to a gas chamber. There were seven gas chambers at Auschwitz. This particular one was underground and the lorry was able to run down the slope and straight into the chamber. Here we were tipped unceremoniously on the floor. The room was about 12 yards square and small lights on the wall dimly illuminated it. When the room was full a hissing sound was heard coming from the centre point on the floor and gas came into the room.

After what seemed about ten minutes some of the victims began to bite their hands and foam at the mouth, and blood issued from their ears, eyes and mouth, and their faces went blue. I suffered from all these symptoms, together with a tight feeling at the throat. I was half conscious when my number was called out by Dr. Mengele and I was led from the chamber.

I attribute my escape to the fact that the daughter of a friend of mine who was an Aryan and a doctor at Auschwitz had seen me being transported to the chamber and had told her mother, who immediately appealed to Dr. Mengele. Apparently he realized that as a political prisoner I was of more value alive than dead, and I was released.

— From the deposition of Regina Bialek, a 28-year-old Polish woman. This postwar affidavit was entered as prosecution evidence in the British military court trial at Lüneburg, Sept.-Nov. 1945, of former Auschwitz and Bergen-Belsen camp personnel. Published in: Raymond Phillips, ed., *Trial of Josef Kramer and Forty-Four Others (The Belsen Trial)* (London: William Hodge, 1949), p. 657.

Ongoing Revisionism

"For traditional Jewish historians," Shermer said, the gas chambers are important because they are "what makes the Holocaust unique over other Holocausts." In Shermer's view, "the Holocaust is only unique in the sense of being contingently unique, as all historical events are ... There's nothing unique about states killing masses of people — it's been done for thousands of years."

Acknowledging that many specific Holocaust claims have been abandoned over the years, Shermer affirmed: "Clearly revision has been going on." Over the years, he said, the Holocaust "story has been refined hundreds of percentage points," and has been revised "umpteen times." "How is it that some people can get away, so to speak, with revising the Holocaust?," Shermer asked, while revisionists cannot? In our society, he said, it all "depends on who is doing the asking."

Weber and Shermer converse during a break at the Holocaust debate sponsored by the Institute for Historical Review.

"The problem you're having as revisionists," he went on, "is that you've been labeled ... the assumption is that there's an ideology behind the questions you've been asking." Revisionist statements, no matter how factual and truthful, are simply dismissed. "You've been labeled," said Shermer of Holocaust revisionists, and a pejorative "label has stuck there."

"The Holocaust *will be* revised," Shermer stressed," by "van Pelt and others ... but they'll get away with it because they're not associated with any ideology, and that's the problem you're encountering. I'm not going to impute ideological motives to any particular person here. I'm just saying that that's the perception out there amongst non-revisionists, and that's the problem you're running into."

Final Remarks

One member of audience — an African-American journalist and television writer — was bothered by the abrupt and facile way that Shermer had acknowledged that a "gas chamber" shown to tourists at Majdanek is a fraud. During the concluding question and answer session, he asked the *Skeptic* editor-publisher if he isn't offended by the fact that a "gas chamber" is deceitfully presented to tourists at Majdanek with a sign that is "so patently untrue." While Shermer was willing to call this sign "not appropriate" and to say that it constitutes a "danger," he did not seem particularly bothered by this fraud.

Shermer seemed similarly unconcerned over the ideological or religious agenda that obviously drives much of the Holocaust campaign — a campaign that portrays all of non-Jewish humanity as collectively guilty for what is regarded as the most terrible crime in history. With the passage of time, said Weber, and as ever more historical evidence comes to light, the Holocaust story diminishes in magnitude. At the same time, he went on, the Holocaust campaign continues — if anything, growing ever more intense with the passage of years.

In our society, the Holocaust story is treated with special reverence. It is simply not permissible to view the fate of Europe's Jews during the Second World War with the same critical, open-minded consideration with which we look at other chapters of history. Consequently, revisionist skeptics are not only dismissed but smeared and vilified, and, in some countries, treated as criminals.

'Politically Correct' Skepticism

Shermer's *Skeptic* magazine, Weber said, safely takes aim at phony UFO sightings, fraudulent health cures, Uri Geller spoon-bending tricks, witchcraft trials in centuries gone by, and so forth. In short, said Weber, it practices "PC skepticism." This kind of skepticism takes no particular courage. "The real challenge" for sincerely open-minded skeptics, said Weber, "is to challenge statements made by governments."

Weber addressed the argument by Shermer and

van Pelt that the alleged "gas chambers" at Auschwitz-Birkenau crematory facilities II and III were originally designed and constructed as normal morgue cellars in 1942, and only later (in late 1942 or early 1943) modified or transformed into homicidal gassing facilities. Van Pelt believes that a decision to kill Auschwitz prisoners in gas chambers was made in the summer of 1941, while other "exterminationists" contend that this decision was made in early 1942.

In either case, this thesis makes not sense, said Weber. Why would the Germans design and construct Kremas II-V at Birkenau — the cornerstone of the Holocaust extermination story — as ordinary, non-homicidal crematory facilities in late 1942 and early 1943, that is, *after* the Germans had supposedly already inaugurated their extermination policy.

Furthermore, Weber said, the crematories at Auschwitz (and especially Auschwitz-Birkenau), with their limited cremation capacities, simply were not designed to dispose of the bodies of many hundreds of thousands of prisoners. In short, the Auschwitz crematories were not planned or built consistent with a plan or policy to exterminate prisoners in the camp. (See: A. Butz, "Some Thoughts on Pressac's Opus," May-June 1993 *Journal*, pp. 23-37.)

Finally, Weber responded to a question about the "bloodcurdling" remarks of high-ranking German officials quoted earlier by Shermer. While these statements do reflect a policy of brutal repression, Weber said, they do not refer to a policy to exterminate Europe's Jews. These remarks are either rhetorical exaggeration or are taken out of context.

Several of those who attended the Weber-Shermer exchange commented that it was not much of a debate because Shermer made so many concessions to the revisionists. In any case, this event was a big step forward for the cause of historical revisionism because it dramatically gave the lie to the often-repeated claim that "the Holocaust" is "undebatable," and showed that the revisionist view of the Holocaust story is one that cannot be dismissed out of hand.

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The Weber-Shermer Debate: A Step Forward

by Pat N. Mason, Jr., Grapevine, Texas

When I first learned of the debate between IHR Director Mark Weber and *Skeptic* magazine editor-publisher Dr. Michael Shermer, I was delighted that a member of the "accepted media" had finally agreed publicly to confront Holocaust revisionist arguments. Viewing the event on videotape, I was even more pleased at the cordial and scholarly atmosphere that characterized the exchange. Both Shermer and Weber behaved respectfully in presenting their conflicting views of the treatment of Europe's Jews during World War II.

Interestingly, Shermer said that he cared little for what others might think of his "heresy" in rubbing elbows with the hated "deniers," adding that he had no fear of retribution that might cost him his livelihood — a confidence that is rare even among some revisionists.

Without doubt, the most striking and pleasant feature was the cogent and unemotional way the two sides exchanged information and presented their views. No shouting, pushing or hysterical accusations — just a calm and reasoned exchange between two intelligent men, the way any legitimate debate should be. As we know, this treatment is regrettably rare — very rare — when the "Holocaust" is the topic of discussion.

Although Dr. Shermer mentioned "being a little nervous" addressing the mostly revisionist audience, he was treated cordially. Typically, the revisionists showed restraint and respect for the opposition. There was one brief glitch, though. At one point a member of the audience interrupted Shermer with an aside in a manner that could be described as mildly rude. He quickly and properly chastised him for the interruption, and then continued.

At this point I could not help but recall that revisionists such as Robert Faurisson or David Irving have borne the brunt of savage personal attacks for expressing their views. From vicious epithets continuously shouted during their presentations, to rampaging mobs overturning tables and ripping up books, both of these men (and especially Faurisson) have had to endure not just assaults against their dignity, but even physical attacks. (On September 16, 1989, Faurisson was assaulted for the seventh time in a broad daylight attack during which he was almost beaten to death.)

As for the debate itself, I found Weber, as always, to be factual and precise with his information. It was not difficult to glean that he was the authoritative source of Holocaust information. Dr. Shermer,

although a bright and pleasant man who had some interesting insights, showed himself to be little more than a hobbyist in his approach to this issue. His main arguments also seemed a bit superficial. For instance, he relies heavily on "testimony evidence," which time and again has proven to be unreliable and/or foggy at best.

Shermer belabored his point about the significance and real meaning of the German word "*ausrotten*." This has always seemed to be a cute topic for tea-time discussion, but not really relevant. He concluded (and I'm paraphrasing here) that "*ausrotten* means *ausrotten* ... to exterminate." Shermer also fell back on a favorite argument of Holocaust historians in citing a passing remark by Goebbels in a diary entry, a passage by Himmler from a speech, and a statement by Frank, and then concluding that similarities in these statements prove a definite conspiracy by the German hierarchy to physically annihilate Europe's Jews.

On several occasions, and to his credit, Shermer honestly (although apparently with some embarrassment) conceded either a lack of knowledge about specific historical issues, or made major concessions to the revisionists on key points of Holocaust dogma. Additionally, he cited "new evidence" compiled by Holocaust researcher Robert-Jan Van Pelt, which affirms that although Auschwitz was not intended to be a "death camp" in the beginning, it somehow "became" one. When Shermer sought to support this theory with some sort of psychobabble, I felt that he strayed from the role of logical scholar to that of dutiful believer. Whatever the validity of such conjectural arguments, though, they are no match for the abundant physical evidence, including the independent forensic studies, the wartime aerial reconnaissance photos, and so forth.

Shermer referred to pipes in a shower room at the Mauthausen camp that is shown to tourists as an execution "gas chamber." Asserting that these pipes carried steam to heat the room, he posed the question: "What else [other than homicidal purposes] could that mean? Why would you want to heat a shower room?" Well, how about to keep whoever was showering from getting cold, maybe, or because whoever plumbed the building cared nothing for esthetics and left the pipes exposed, or a myriad of other reasonable explanations.

Anywhere else, a few pipes in a shower room would be just *pipes*. If Shermer takes a shower after one of his 20K bike races, and sees heating pipes on the wall, I doubt that he'd bolt from the shower room screaming about gassing. In former Nazi camps, though, they are "proof" of murder. As a result of some 50 years of hysterical anti-Nazi propaganda, promoted by those whose personal hatred or ideological agenda blinds them to their own delusions, everything in the former German camps is suspect, no matter how trivial or insignificant.

Actually, my attitude toward the Holocaust has been similar to Shermer's. That is, for a long time it held no special fascination for me, much less did it prompt guilt-ridden hand wringing. But then, what began as an innocent interest in ambiguous details about a much-discussed chapter of history grew into an intense craving for historical truth, fired with growing anger toward those who embrace tyrannical suppression masquerading as noble indignation.

It would be one thing if Jews around the world quietly believed various bizarre "Holocaust" claims, used their own money to build Holocaust monuments and memorial institutions, and taught their children whatever lessons they deem appropriate, while leaving the rest of us alone. But that is not what happens. Instead, a ceaseless campaign seeks to instill in all non-Jews a collective guilt for an alleged crime for which they are not in the least guilty. Whatever responsibility Jews may have for this campaign, non-Jews are certainly culpable for buying into it. While organizations such as the ADL and the Simon Wiesenthal Center do their best to slander and silence revisionists, aiding and abetting them are non-Jewish political and religious leaders and other prominent figures who do so out of self-interest.

Does this sound nutty or "extremist?" Anyone who thinks so such listen carefully to an hour of Elie Wiesel. Even though this professional survivor is treated as a kind of living saint, his self-righteousness and horror stories have become embarrassingly ridiculous. Even more culpable than Wiesel are those who swallow such bombastic bilge. This unchallenged adherence to dogma always reminds me of John Burroughs' words: "It is easier to believe than to deny. Our minds are naturally affirmative."

Michael Shermer deserves a hearty "bravo" for graciously agreeing to participate in this IHR-sponsored debate, and for upholding the right of all Americans, including revisionists, to disagree, question, and contend. Although he still upholds the pro-Holocaust position, his performance in the debate shows that he is simply not familiar with the massive documentation and other evidence compiled by revisionist researchers. If Shermer is sincerely interested in getting to the bottom of this issue, and if he can maintain a scholarly attitude, he will be unable indefinitely to deny revisionist arguments and the overwhelming evidence.

All in all, I thought that the Weber-Shermer debate was very good, and can be considered a great step forward in righting the wrongs perpetrated by Holocaust falsehoods. There is no doubt that Holocaust revisionism lacks only public exposure for success.

A New Threat to Freedom of Speech

Canadian Jewish Congress Threatens Journalist for Holocaust Heresy

Attempt to Silence Collins Fails

Few North American writers have come under more sustained attack for outspoken and often unorthodox views than Doug Collins, an acclaimed British-born Canadian author and journalist who writes a popular column for the *North Shore News* of North Vancouver, British Columbia. Every journalist understands that criticism comes with the job. But the relentless campaign to silence Collins includes legal measures with ominous significance for all defenders of free speech and unfettered historical inquiry.

In July 1994 the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) brought a formal complaint against Collins, charging him with violating British Columbia's amended "Human Rights Act." According to the broadly-worded 1993 amendment to the Act, "no person shall publish ... any notice, sign, symbol ... that indicates discrimination against a person or a group or class of person ... or is likely to expose a person or a group to hatred or contempt." As Collins notes, this law "covers the waterfront, the key words being 'indicate' and 'is likely'." There is no limit to the fine that can be imposed on violators.

One local City Council member publicly expressed the hope that the newly amended Act would "put a stop to the kind of writing Doug Collins does." Considering that the new law was promptly dubbed the "Kill Collins Act," it's not surprising that he was the first person charged under it. "I had the honor," Collins wryly observed, "of being the first columnist in Canadian history to be hauled before a Human Rights Council on a charge of political incorrectness."

Accusing Collins of anti-Jewish "Holocaust denial," the CJC specifically complained about a March 1994 column he had written about the much-hyped movie "Schindler's List," which he called "Swindler's List." (This column was reprinted in the May-June 1994 *Journal*.) Says Collins: "You gotta love their movie and the people who made it, you see. Otherwise it's off to the dungeons."

Laying down operative guidelines for the "politically correct," Canadian Jewish Congress official Bernie Farber declared: "Holocaust denial is anti-Semitic hate speech subject to the laws of Canada and the human rights provisions of the BC Human Rights Code. Hate speech is not free speech and should never be tolerated in a free and democratic society." (*Financial Post*, Dec. 17, 1994)

Joining the CJC action, a Jewish businessman named Harry Abrams last summer filed two new complaints against Collins for violations of the Human Rights Code, charging that the columnist had incited hatred and contempt against Jews, Iranians, Chinese, Sikhs and Japanese.

Thoughtful Criticism

The Collins affair has been receiving some country-wide attention, much of it critical of the CJC action and the provincial law. Canada's most influential daily, the Toronto *Globe & Mail*, commented in an editorial: "We are witnessing a bid to criminalize certain types of speech, but without actually using the criminal law to do it."

One of Canada's most influential journalists, Peter Worthington, told readers of his widely-read Toronto *Sun* column (Feb. 9, 1995) that the CJC action against Collins is "wrong, foolish and an affront to free speech." He continued:

> I suspect what bugs Collins is what also bugs me — how we seem so concerned about what happened to Jews in World War II, but seem too casual (if not callous) about other holocausts, which surface in the media briefly, then fade from memory ... Having been victims of racism and hate, I think influential and respected organizations like the CJC should be especially wary about calling names and ascribing motives to others that may be wrong.

The Publisher, the voice of the Canadian Community Newspapers Association, warned in an editorial (Dec. 1994) that "everyone involved with newspapers — producers and readers alike — should be concerned with" the Collins/ CJC case. While Collins "expresses strong views, and is far from politically correct," the editorial continued, he "does not write hate literature." British Columbia's amended Human Rights Act "opens any Canadian to persecution by anyone who disagrees with the

opinions expressed."

Not one to meekly submit to pressure, Collins is defiantly fighting back. The Canadian Jewish Congress "and its allied organizations," he charges, are "our biggest threat to free speech ... The CJC complaint is a direct attack on freedom of the press."

Collins looks forward to a full-scale legal and media clash, anticipating that the CJC challenge and the "Human Rights Act" cannot survive the public scrutiny and ridicule that will inevitably accompany a well-publicized legal battle. As we go to press, this matter has still not been brought to court.

Doug Collins' smiling face is featured in large promotional ads placed on city buses by the *North Shore News* of British Columbia.

Collins' Record

In view of his record, especially during World War II, the effort by Jewish groups to portray Collins as some kind of "neo-Nazi" is simply absurd. After joining the British army as a volunteer at the age of 19, he served as an infantry sergeant in 1940 in France, where he was captured. He was later awarded the Military Medal "for bravery in the field" fighting Germans at Dunkirk.

Escaping from prisoner of war camp Stalag VIIIB in Silesia, he stealthily made his way to Hungary. After being captured there, he made another daring escape, this time making his way to Romania. He was imprisoned once again, but when Romania capitulated in 1944, he was freed and returned to Britain. After re-joining the military, he served in the final months' military campaign in northwest Europe. Following demobilization in 1946, he joined the British Control Commission in occupied Germany. He moved to Canada in 1952.

Collins' journalistic record is equally impressive. Recipient of two of Canada's most coveted awards for journalism, his career has included work, both as a reporter and commentator, for several major Canadian daily papers, and on television and radio. He is also the author of several books. His presentation at the Tenth IHR Conference, "Reflections on the Second World War, Free Speech and Revisionism," was published in the Fall 1991 *Journal*. (It is also available on audio and video tape from the IHR. See also "Doug Collins Under New Fire," in the Nov.-Dec. 1994 *Journal*, pp. 43-46).

It's difficult to be neutral about Collins. While some detest him, many admire him as an eloquent voice for Canada's "silent majority." His twice-weekly column is a very popular feature of the *North Shore News*. In vigorous, straight-forward prose, he lays out well-informed but common-sense views on the country's most heated issues, including immigration, the status of Quebec, and special privilege "rights."

During a brief appearance in a recent CBS television "60 Minutes" report, he expressed opposition to Canada's open door policy, which has brought a large influx of Chinese to Vancouver, dramatically transforming British Columbia's cultural and racial character.

Heated Press Council Hearing

Last year Collins survived a serious threat to his career. Lionel Kenner, a former philosophy professor and Jewish community activist, was so upset by several of Collins' 1993 and 1994 columns that he filed a formal complaint with the British Columbia Press Council, a quasi-judicial tribunal that oversees the media. (These columns were reprinted in the *Journal*, Nov.-Dec. 1993 and May-June 1994.)

On the basis of this complaint, Collins and Kenner were called to a formal hearing of the Press Council on July 24. Kenner told the panel that "it is a long-standing practice of Mr. Collins to mislead his readers," and charged that the *North Shore News* editor and publisher "have either knowingly

colluded with Collins in the publishing of deliberate lies or alternatively they have carelessly published deliberate lies."

In a meeting room packed with dozens of ardent supporters, Collins defended his writings and the principle of free speech. He displayed ten books he had consulted in writing his columns on the Holocaust issue, including Dr. Butz' *Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, and he spoke about his own visit to Auschwitz.

Collins explained that while he does not deny the Holocaust, he does "question the six millions story" and has "doubts about the alleged gas chambers." He also stressed, "I'm not in any way sympathetic to the Nazi regime."

Kenner's complaint, said Collins, "is totally in line with the views and wishes of the Canadian Jewish Congress, a pressure group that is prominent in the propagandizing of what is known as the Holocaust." Several times the room broke into loud applause for Collins, who concluded his remarks by quoting George Orwell: "Freedom of speech is my right to say what you don't want to hear."

In its ruling, issued in late October, the Press Council reproached Collins. It found that he had "misled" readers by inadequately quoting sources in one of his columns, thus breaching the Council's code of practice. At the same time, though, the Council did not conclude that Collins had lied, nor did it instruct Collins or the newspaper to issue a correction or apology. It went to state: "The code's accuracy provisions must not be narrowly applied here because Mr. Collins was engaging in the expression of opinion, not writing a news story, and enjoyed the widest possible latitude ... Unpopular or controversial voices must be challenged but never silenced."

Specifically, the Press Council declared that it does "not condemn Mr. Collins or the *News* for exercising their constitutional right of free expression." In some news reports published about the decision, this salient point was not mentioned.

While he has survived this latest threat, Collins' enemies remain implacable and determined. The struggle continues.

The IHR Needs Your Help

Only with the sustained help of friends can the Institute for Historical Review carry on its vital mission of promoting truth in history. If you agree that the work of our Institute is important, *please support it with your generous donation*!

On the Front Line for Free Speech and Open Historical Inquiry

Doug Collins

The Press Council Decision

[From the *North Shore News*, Oct. 22, 1995]

Here's a shot from the battle front and the British Columbia Press Council decision that "in part" upholds the complaints made by my Jewish friend Lionel Kenner concerning a column I wrote two years ago.

The piece was headed "The Story Keeps Changing," a reference to the numbers lost in the "holocaust." [Reprinted in the Nov.-Dec. 1993 *Journal*, pp. 10-11.] In it, I gave a two-line mention to a report put out (I said) by the International Red Cross in the 1970s that estimated 300,000 or so as the number of deaths in the concentration camps. I did not claim that that was the true figure, only that it was one of many. Hence the headline.

The Council conceded that I accepted the report in good faith, but stated that Kenner has provided information from the IRC that "unequivocally refutes the authenticity of those reports as being genuine Red Cross documents." Kenner provided no such proof at the hearing even though he had had two years in which to do so. Over my objections, however, the Council granted him five weeks to come up with something *after* the hearing. It would have been proper on the Council's part, I think, to give *me* another five weeks in which to provide a rebuttal. But it didn't.

The report in question came from the International Tracing Service (ITS) at Arolsen in West Germany. It exists, and is not a "fake," as reported by the scumrag Vancouver *Province*. Nor did the Press Council use that expression. The issue is whether the ITS is officially part of the International Red Cross in Geneva. Well, at the second Zündel trial in 1988 witness Charles Biedermann stated that he was the International Red Cross director of the ITS, and that the Red Cross "took over its administration in 1955." That might mean the service is not, technically, part of the Red Cross. But that's to split hairs.

It has been claimed, too, that the Red Cross came under tremendous pressure from Jewish sources when the 300,000 figure was published, and has done its best to play it down. Subsequent reports (not in my possession when I wrote the col-

umn) pointed out that the figure should not be taken to mean all deaths in the concentration camps. But — to repeat — I never said it did. The figure related to inquiries from relatives about deaths in the camps. So my question is: if there were 6,000,000 Jewish deaths, how come only 300,000 inquiries were made?

The Council criticized me for not using a full quote from Jewish academic Arno Mayer [Princeton University history professor]. Mayer wrote a book [*Why Did the Heavens Not Darken?: The "Final Solution" in History*] in which he said that sources on the gas chambers "are at once rare and unreliable." He went on to say that while there was no denying "the many contradictions and ambiguities in the existing sources, they were insufficient to put in doubt ... the use of gas chambers in the mass murder of Jews at Auschwitz."

In that case, I was not writing an article on Mayer's book but a letter to the editor, and letters to the editor have to be kept short. Furthermore, "rare and unreliable" was the bottom line of what he had to say.

The column itself used many sources — hence its "Story Keeps Changing" headline — and referred to Winston Churchill's having made no mention of any holocaust or gas chambers in his six-volume war memoirs.

The second Council criticism related to Holocaust expert Yehuda Bauer's report in the *New York Times* [Nov. 12, 1989] that "the larger figures (of those who died in Auschwitz) have been dismissed for years, except that it hasn't reached the public yet." The Council faulted me for not specifying that Bauer was referring only to Auschwitz. But that's nit-picking.

Auschwitz had always been painted as the main death camp, with 4,000,000 deceased. Bauer knew that was nonsense, and the Polish government has since reduced the figure to something over 1,000,000. Jean Claude Pressac, a prominent "pro-holocaust" writer, now puts it at 750,000. As I told the Council, if you radically reduce the Auschwitz figure, as Bauer did, the 6,000,000 figure also falls by the wayside, even if allowances are made for not all of the alleged victims having been Jews.

A pointer to these criticisms being small stuff is that the Council refused to order the *North Shore News* to publish corrections or apologies. Not much of a return from a 40,000 word (!) complaint.

Onward and upward, comrades.

"Nothing great was ever achieved without enthusiam."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson, *Circles*

Canadian Liberties Under Attack

[From the *North Shore News*, Sept. 27, 1995]

Let's give the North Vancouver District Public Library a medal. And while we are at it let's give Councillor Ernie Crist a medal, too. Here's why.

Some weeks ago Crist got a resolution through council deploring attacks on freedom of speech. And there's no need, I hope, to remind you who is mounting those attacks. Council agreed to ask the Union of British Columbia Municipalities convention to endorse the United Nations' principle of "upholding and defending freedom of expression, freedom of the press, and intellectual freedom."

I wrote a column about Crist's move, and (Bingo!) he began to get calls. There were references to the villain of the piece (me) and the usual double-talk: "I'm in favor of freedom of speech, but ..." But nothing. We either have it or we don't. And right now we have it only at considerable risk. Jail and fines loom for those who "go too far."

Doug Collins

Some of the callers were miffed that the North Van library has copies of *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century* and *Confessions of a Holocaust Revisionist*, by Bradley Smith. Both dispute the six-million story. The first, especially, is a deeply researched effort by Professor Arthur Butz of the US that took him seven years to write. And both have been reviewed in this space.

Thanks to the usual anti-free speech artists, these books and others like it are banned in Canada. So if the Customs people notice them at the border or wherever it is that they carry out their vital tasks, they won't be delivered. But possession as such is not a crime. I have copies of both.

After receiving the complaints, Crist asked the library whether it had a policy on such books. He didn't want to support something that might be ille-

gal but made it clear that if it *was* illegal he would ask the library to take the books off the shelf. And then start a campaign to get the law changed.

B.G. Thompson of the library's adult collections section was well aware that some people would like to see such books banned, but came back with this answer:

> The library supports the view that materials in our collection should represent, as far as possible, a wide range of opinions and different sides of controversial issues. For this reason, library collections will include items which some individuals may consider to be unconventional, unpopular, or unacceptable.
>
> To the best of our knowledge, the two titles in question are the only volumes in the collection which deny or question the significance of the Holocaust. By contrast, the library carries at least 145 titles (books and videos) which aver the Holocaust as an unquestioned historical event.
>
> We do not endorse every idea found in the collection, but we do believe that the public should be given the opportunity to make its own assessment of controversial materials. For the foregoing reason, and despite the Canada Customs' ruling regarding importation, it is the library's decision that the books at issue should remain on the shelves.

Couldn't have put it better myself. I said almost exactly the same thing at the famous Press Council hearing at which Lionel Kenner of North Van held me up as a sinner.

It remains, however, that some people ("I like free speech, but...") cannot tolerate the slightest deviation from what they consider to be Holy Writ. The Spanish Inquisition thought the same way.

It is pleasant to record that the Canadian Library Association also has a policy on intellectual freedom. It reads in part as follows:

> All persons in Canada have the fundamental rights, as embodied in the nation's Bill of Rights and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, to have access to all expressions of knowledge, creativity and intellectual activity, and to express their thoughts publicly. This right to intellectual freedom, under the law, is essential to the health and development of Canadian society.

Let's hope someone tells the NDP [New Democratic Party] and the Canadian Jewish Congress about that.Let's hope someone tells the NDP [New Democratic Party] and the Canadian Jewish Congress about that.

Thousands Check Out IHR Material

Internet Web Site Offers Instant Worldwide Access to Revisionism

Through his personal Internet Web site, *Journal* associate editor Greg Raven makes available an impressive selection of material from the Institute for Historical Review, including IHR *Journal* articles and reviews and IHR leaflets. A listing of every item that has ever appeared in this *Journal* enables callers to quickly search for titles and authors. New Web site items are added as time permits.

This revisionist material is instantly available to millions around the world, free of censorship by governments or powerful special interest groups. It can be reached 24 hours a day from 146 countries through the World Wide Web (WWW), a multimedia Internet service.

Each month about two thousand people in dozens of countries visit this Web site, with the average caller viewing 12 files (or articles) per visit. Because it is linked to several other revisionist (and anti-revisionist) Web sites, visitors can easily access vast amounts of additional information.

The Web site address for IHR material is
http://www.kaiwan.com/~ihrgreg

E-mail messages should be sent to the IHR in care of ihrgreg@kaiwan.com

"What arguments can I find by Maimonedes and Rabbi Elezar ben Shamoua to oppose Zündel?" A cartoon in the French weekly *Rivarol* (Feb. 2, 1996) pokes fun at Jewish frustration over the remarkable Internet impact of revisionists such as German-Canadian Ernst Zündel.

"A word wounds more easily than it heals."

— Goethe

'The Jewish World' Against Pressac

As *Journal* readers know, Jean-Claude Pressac is a French pharmacist who has been used by the French "Nazi hunters" Serge and Beate Klarsfeld in their campaign against the Holocaust revisionists. Their relationship has been confirmed by Michael Berenbaum, Director of the Research Institute of the US Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC. In the 1994 book *Anatomy of the Auschwitz Death Camp* (p. xiii), Berenbaum writes: "Since 1982, the work of Mr. Pressac has been promoted and supported on a documentary, editorial and financial level by the Beate Klarsfeld Foundation..."

When Pressac's 210-page book, *Les Crématoires d'Auschwitz: La Machinerie du meurtre de masse* ("The Crematories of Auschwitz: The Machinery of Mass Killing") was published in 1993, leading newspapers and magazines around the world immediately praised it as the definitive response to revisionist arguments. For example, an Associated Press article that appeared in a number of American newspapers told readers that, according to "Holocaust experts," this book "will provide irrefutable proof to combat those who claim the Holocaust ... didn't happen." Similarly, *Newsweek* magazine called Pressac's work a "dramatic rebuttal" of revisionist views (Dec. 20, 1993), and noted that "Holocaust experts have hailed his work as definitive." (See the Jan.-Feb. 1994 *Journal*, p. 23, and the July-August 1994 *Journal*, pp. 28 ff.)

In 1994, Robert Faurisson published *Réponse à Jean-Claude Pressac sur le problème des chambres à gaz* ("Response to Jean-Claude Pressac on the problem of the gas chambers"). Pressac's book, Faurisson wrote, had no scholarly value, lacked sources, included numerous misrepresentations and distortions, and seemed like the work of a novelist.

A German version of Faurisson's *Réponse*, supplemented with contributions by Ernst Gauss, Manfred Köhler, Serge Thion and Carlo Mattogno, has recently been published under the title *Auschwitz: Nackte Fackten* ("Auschwitz: Naked Facts"), by VHO, Postbus 60, 2600 Berchem 2, Belgium.

For writing his *Réponse*, Faurisson was immediately dragged into court, found guilty, and sentenced. The dramatic high point of the trial was the cross-examination on May 9, 1995, of Pressac himself, who had been subpoenaed as a witness by Faurisson. Unable to answer the questions put to him by defense attorney Eric Delcroix, Pressac collapsed on the witness stand. (See "French Court Fines Faurisson, Roques for 'Holocaust Denial' Book," Nov.-Dec. 1995 *Journal*, pp. 13-17).

Now Pressac seems to have been entirely abandoned by his former friends. In a recent issue of the leading French-Jewish intellectual journal, *Le Monde juif* ("The Jewish World"), published in Paris by the "Center for Contemporary Jewish Documentation," he comes under devastating criticism from Jewish scholar Maurice Cling. (*Le Monde juif*, Jan.-April 1996, pp. 192-196).

Commenting on just one page of Pressac's *Les Crématoires d'Auschwitz*, Cling uses these words: "... doctored text ... does not give his source ... no source cited ... no source ... substitution ... no mention of any source ... dubious use of a text ... evidence of an indisputable literary talent ... concealment of sources ... distortion of the original text ... wild imaginings ... hypocrisy ... absurd affirmation."

Then comes the most serious accusation: Pressac is a disciple of Faurisson. Because Pressac once knew Faurisson, and allegedly "converted" from revisionism to anti-revisionism, he was therefore supposedly well-suited to refute revisionist arguments. In fact, says Faurisson, Pressac was *never* a revisionist. If there is one author whom Faurisson (unlike some revisionists) has never spared, it is the suburban pharmacist.

Commenting on the vitality of Holocaust revisionism in France — in spite of laws restricting free historical inquiry, vicious media attacks and even violence by Jewish terrorist groups — is this cartoon by "chard" in the French paper *Rivarol*, April 7, 1995. "And don't go to see the revisionists!," says French-Jewish anti-revisionist attorney and publisher Serge Klarsfeld to "truth," as she takes off on her own.

Zionism's Violent Legacy

DONALD NEFF

It was 48 years ago, on January 4, 1948, when Jewish terrorists drove a truck loaded with explosives into the center of the all Arab city of Jaffa and detonated it, killing 26 and wounding around 100 Palestinian men, women and children.[1] The attack was the work of the *Irgun Zvai Leumi* — the "National Military Organization," also known by the Hebrew letters *Etzel* — the largest Jewish terrorist group in Palestine. The Irgun was headed by Revisionist Zionist Menachem Begin and had been killing and maiming Arabs, Britons and even Jews for the previous ten years in its efforts to establish a Jewish state.

This terror campaign meant that at the core of Revisionist Zionism there existed a philosophical embrace of violence. It was this legacy of violence that contributed to the assassination of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin on November 4, 1995.

The Irgun was not the only Jewish terrorist group but it was the most active in causing indiscriminate terror in pre-Israel Palestine. Up to the time of the Jaffa attack, its most spectacular feat had been the July 22, 1946, blowing up of the King David Hotel in Jerusalem, with the killing of 91 people — 41 Arabs, 28 Britons and 17 Jews.[2]

The other major Jewish terrorist group operating in Palestine in the 1940s was the *Lohamei Herut Israel* — "Fighters for the Freedom of Israel," *Lehi* in the Hebrew acronym — also known as the Stern Gang after its fanatical founder Avraham Stern. Two of its more spectacular outrages included the assassination of British Colonial Secretary Lord Moyne in Cairo on November 6, 1944, and the assassination of Count Folke Bernadotte of Sweden in Jerusalem on September 17, 1948.[3]

Both groups collaborated in the massacre at Deir Yassin, in which some 254 Palestinian men, women and children were slain on April 9, 1948. Palestinian survivors were driven like ancient slaves through the streets of Jerusalem by the celebrating terrorists.[4]

Donald Neff is author of the recently published *Fallen Pillars: U.S. Policy Towards Palestine and Israel Since 1945* (Washington, DC: Institute for Palestine Studies, 1995), as well as of the 1988 trilogy, *Warriors at Suez: Eisenhower Takes America Into the Middle East in 1956, Warriors for Jerusalem: The Six Days that Changed the Middle East*, and *Warriors Against Israel: America Comes to the Rescue.* This article is reprinted from the January 1996 issue of *The Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* (P.O. Box 53062, Washington, DC 20009).

Yitzhak Shamir was one of the three leaders of *Lehi* who made the decision to assassinate Moyne and Bernadotte. Both he and Begin later became prime ministers and ruled Israel for a total of 13 years between 1977 and 1992. They were both leaders of Revisionist Zionism, that messianic group of ultranationalists founded by Vladimir Zeev Jabotinsky in the 1920s. He prophesied that it would take an "iron wall of Jewish bayonets" to gain a homeland among the Arabs in Palestine.[5] His followers took his slogan literally.

Begin and the Revisionists were heartily hated by the mainline Zionists led by David Ben-Gurion. He routinely referred to Begin as a Nazi and compared him to Hitler. In a famous letter to *The New York Times* in 1948, Albert Einstein called the Irgun "a terrorist, rightwing, chauvinist organization" that stood for "ultranationalism, religious mysticism and racial superiority."[6] He opposed Begin's visit to the United States in 1949 because Begin and his movement amounted to "a Fascist party for whom terrorism (against Jews, Arabs, and British alike), and misrepresentation are means, and a 'leader state' is the goal," adding:

> The IZL [Irgun] and Stern groups inaugurated a reign of terror in the Palestine Jewish community. Teachers were beaten up for speaking against them, adults were shot for not letting their children join them. By gangster methods, beatings, window smashing, and widespread robberies, the terrorists intimidated the population and exacted a heavy tribute.

Ben-Gurion considered the Revisionists so threatening that shortly after he proclaimed establishment of Israel on May 14, 1948, he demanded that the Jewish terrorist organizations disband. In defiance, Begin sought to import a huge shipment of weapons aboard a ship named *Altalena*, Jabotinsky's *nom de plume*.[7]

The ship was a war surplus US tank landing craft and had been donated to the Irgun by Hillel Kook's Hebrew Committee for National Liberation, an American organization made up of Jewish-American supporters of the Irgun.[8] Even in those days it was Jewish Americans who were the main source of funds for Zionism. While few of them emigrated to Israel, Jewish Americans were generous in financing the Zionist enterprise. As in Israel, they were split between mainstream Zionism and Revisionism. One of the best known Revisionists was Ben Hecht, the American newsman and playwright. After one of the Irgun's terrorist acts, he wrote:[9]

> The Jews of America are for you. You are their champions ... Every time you blow up a British arsenal, or wreck a British jail, or send a British railroad train sky high, or rob a British

> bank, or let go with your guns and bombs at British betrayers and invaders of your homeland, the Jews of America make a little holiday in their hearts.

The *Altalena* was loaded with $5 million worth of arms, including 5,000 British Lee Enfield rifles, more than three million rounds of ammunition, 250 Bren guns, 250 Sten guns, 150 German Spandau machine guns, 50 mortars and 5,000 shells as well as 940 Jewish volunteers. Ben-Gurion reacted with fury, ordering the ship sunk in Tel Aviv harbor. Shell fire by the new nation's armed forces set the *Altalena* afire, killing 14 Jews and wounding 69. Two regular army men were killed and six wounded during the fighting.[10] Begin had been aboard but escaped injury. Later that night he railed against Ben-Gurion as "a crazy dictator" and the cabinet as "a government of criminal tyrants, traitors and fratricides."[11]

Ben-Gurion's deputy commander in the *Altalena* affair was Yitzhak Rabin, the same man who as prime minister was assassinated by one of the spiritual heirs of Menachem Begin's Irgun terrorist group. All his life, and especially in his last years, Rabin had opposed Jewish Americans and their radical allies in Israel who continued to embrace the philosophy of the Irgun and who fought against the peace process, thereby earning their enduring hatred.

Thus at the heart of the Jewish state there has been a long and violent struggle between mainline Zionists and Revisionists that continues today. Despite cries after Rabin's assassination that it was unknown for Jew to kill Jew, intramural hatred and occasional violence have marked relations between Zionism's competing groups.

The core of that conflict, one that continues to divide Israel and its American supporters as well, lies in the different philosophies of David Ben-Gurion and Vladimir Jabotinsky. Both were from Eastern Europe, born in the 1880s, and both sought an exclusivist Jewish state. But while Ben-Gurion was pragmatic and secular, Jabotinsky was impatient and messianic, a leader who glorified in the heroic trappings of fascism. Ben-Gurion was usually willing to take less now to get more later, and thus he was content to accept partition of Palestine as a necessary stepping stone toward a larger Jewish state. Jabotinsky, on the other hand, impatiently preached the right of Jews not only to all of Palestine but to "both sides of the Jordan," meaning the combined area of Jordan and Palestine, or as he called it, *Eretz Yisrael*, the ancient land of Israel.[12]

Ben-Gurion was a gruff realist who carefully calculated his moves with a wary eye toward the interests of the great European powers and the United States. *Time* magazine, in a profile of Ben-Gurion in August 1948, described him as "premier and defense minister, labor leader and philosopher, hardheaded, unsociable and abrupt politician, a prophet who carries a gun.[13] Wrote his biographer, Michael Bar-Zohar: "Obstinacy and total dedication to a single objective were the most characteristic traits of David Ben-Gurion."[14]

Baruch Goldstein wore a yellow Star of David with the German word for "Jew" to show his ardent concern for the "lessons of the Holocaust" and its meaning for all Jews. Today many hardline Zionists revere this mass murderer of Palestinians as a Jewish hero and martyr.

Jabotinsky, by contrast, was flamboyant and a devoted admirer of Italy's fascist leader Benito Mussolini. His disciple, Menachem Begin, described him as "a speaker, a writer, a philosopher, a statesman, a soldier, a linguist ... But to those of us who were his pupils, he was not only their teacher, but also the bearer of their hope." Begin's biographer, Eric Silver, added: "There was a darker side to [Jabotinsky's] philosophy: blood, fire and steel, the supremacy of the leader, discipline and ceremony, the manipulation of the masses, racial exclusivity as the heart of the nation.[15] One of Jabotinsky's slogans was: "We shall create, with sweat and blood, a race of men, strong, brave and cruel.[16]

Jabotinsky died in 1940, and it was Menachem Begin who refined his wild nationalism into practical political action. Begin concluded: "The world does not pity the slaughtered. It only respects those who fight." He turned Descartes' famous dictum around, saying: "We fight, therefore we exist."[17] Central to Begin's outlook was the concept of the "fighting Jew." As he wrote:[18]

> Out of blood and fire and tears and ashes, a new specimen of human being was born, a specimen completely unknown to the world for over 1,800 years, the "FIGHTING JEW." It is axiomatic that those who fight have to hate .... We had to hate first and foremost, the horrify-

ing, age-old, inexcusable utter defenselessness of our Jewish people, wandering through millennia, through a cruel world, to the majority of whose inhabitants the defenselessness of the Jews was a standing invitation to massacre them.

From these early leaders of Zionism (Ben-Gurion died in 1973 and Begin in 1992) have emerged their direct descendants in the Israeli political spectrum. Rabin and his successor, Shimon Peres, were both protégés of Ben-Gurion, and have carried on his mainstream secular Zionism. On Jabotinsky's and Begin's side, the followers have been Yitzhak Shamir, Ariel Sharon and, now, Bemoaning Netanyahu, the current leader of the Likud.

Rabin's Strategy

While the two major factions of Zionism disagree on tactics, their ultimate aim of maintaining a Jewish state free of non-Jews was the same. Rabin explained his strategy shortly before his death during an interview with Rowland Evans and Robert Novak:[19]

> I believe that dreams of Jews for two thousand years to return to Zion were to build a Jewish state and not a binational state. Therefore I don't want to annex the 2.2 million Palestinians who are a different entity from us — politically, religiously, nationally — against their will to become Israelis. Therefore I see peaceful coexistence between Israel as a Jewish state — not all over the land of Israel, on most of it, its capital the united Jerusalem, its security border the Jordan River — next to it a Palestinian entity, less than a state, that runs the life of the Palestinians. It is not ruled by Israel. It is ruled by the Palestinians. This is my goal — not to return to the pre-Six-Day-War lines, but to create two entities. I want a separation between Israel and the Palestinians who reside in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, and they will be a different entity that rules itself.

In the Revisionist's vocabulary, the goal was the same, if more expansionist and expressed in more direct and pugnacious words. Former Defense Minister Ariel Sharon, a leading spokesman of Zionism's right wing, commented in 1993: "Our forefathers did not come here in order to build a democracy but to build a Jewish state."[20]

The occupation of all of Palestine, including Jerusalem, in the 1967 war and the coming to power a decade later of Menachem Begin gave a profound boost to Revisionism and its radical philosophy. During this period there arose the firebrand Meir Kahane, a Brooklyn-born rabbi who openly espoused the removal of the Palestinians from all of Palestine. Under the influence of his fiery rhetoric, thousands of Orthodox Jewish Americans were encouraged to emigrate to Israel as settlers on occupied Palestinian land, adding to the radicalization of Israeli politics. After Kahane's assassination in New York in 1990 by an Arab, *New York Times* correspondent John Kifner reported that Kahane had been successful in the sense that many of his ideas "had crept into the mainstream" in Israel.

Dr. Ehud Sprinzak, an Israeli expert on the far right in Israel, observed: "Where [Kahane] has succeeded is in changing the thinking of many Israelis toward anti-Arab feelings and violence. He forced the more respectable parties to change. In the 1970s Kahane was in the political wilderness, but in the 1980s the center had moved toward Kahane." Observed the Jewish Telegraph Agency: "Rabbi Kahane could die satisfied that his message has impacted deeply and widely throughout Israeli society."[21]

By the mid-1990s, even Kahane's violent ideas seemed somewhat mild in the context of the radicalized politics of Israel. A new strain of religious extremism has been added to the Revisionist ranks. This became obvious on February 25, 1994, when Brooklyn-born Dr. Baruch Goldstein, a Kahane disciple, walked into the Ibrahim mosque, called the Cave of Machpela by Jews, in Hebron and killed 29 and wounded upwards of 150 Palestinian worshippers.[22] While Rabin and labor Zionists condemned him, Goldstein became a hero for Revisionist Zionists. A shrine was made of his grave and a group of Revisionists grew up called "Goldsteiners." They are dedicated to the "sublime ideals of Goldstein" and urge "all true Jews to follow his footsteps."[23]

While the Revisionists had always had an element of religious messianism, the most radical of their current heirs come from ultrareligious Orthodox Jews who are less consumed by politics than religion.[24] They believe they are God's messengers. Thus Rabin's assassin, Yigal Amir, cited the authority of God to explain the murder.

This is a sea change in the mindset — if not the violence — of the traditional Revisionists. For instance, in 1943 Yitzhak Shamir ordered the assassination of one of his closest Sternist friends, but offered an entirely different rationale that had nothing to do with God. Mainly the motive stemmed from political and tactical reasons. Shamir wrote in his memoirs, *In the Final Analysis*, that Stern commander Eliyahu Giladi had become "strange and wild" and had wanted to shoot at crowds of Jews and urged the assassination of David Ben-Gurion, acts that would have been highly unpopular. Wrote Shamir: "I was afraid that he had gone completely crazy. I knew that I had to take a fateful decision,

and I didn't evade it.[25] Giladi was fatally shot in the back on a beach south of Tel Aviv and his killer was never found.[26]

The new Revisionists have now expanded the right to kill claimed by the early Revisionists in the name of nationalism to include a divine right. In the end, they are less interested in foreign and domestic affairs than in justifying man's acts to God. It is a powerful and inflammatory mix of nationalism and religion that is almost certain to lead to more violence unless Israel is able to look into its own soul.

Recommended Reading

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Notes

1. Sam Pope Brewer, *New York Times*, Jan. 5, 1948, and Khalidi, *Before Their Diaspora*, p. 316. Also see Palumbo, *The Palestinian Catastrophe*, pp. 83-4. Initial reports put the death toll at 34.
2. Bethell, *The Palestine Triangle*, p. 263; Sachar, *A History of Israel*, p. 267. Details on the bombing and reaction of British officials are in Nakhleh, *Encyclopedia of the Palestine Problem*, pp. 269-70.
3. Bethell, *Palestine Triangle*, pp. 181-87, 263; Sachar, *A History of Israel*, p. 267; Marion, *A Death in Jerusalem*, p. 208.
4. Khalidi, *From Haven to Conquest*, pp. 761-78; Silver, *Begin*, pp. 88-96; Nakhleh, *Encyclopedia of the Palestine Problem*, pp. 271-72.
5. Silver, *Begin*, p. 12.
6. *New York Times*, Nov. 27, 1948.
7. Bar-Zohar, *Ben-Gurion*, p. 175.
8. Silver, *Begin*, p. 98.
9. Bethell, *The Palestine Triangle*, pp. 308-9. An interview reflecting Hecht's views appeared in *The New York Times*, May 28, 1947.
10. Silver, *Begin*, p. 108.
11. Silver, *Begin*, p. 108.
12. In Hebrew, *Eretz Yisrael* means the "Land of Israel," a phrase invested with strong nationalist feelings.
13. *Time*, August 16, 1948.
14. Bar-Zohar, *Ben Gurion*, pp. 77, xvii.
15. Silver, *Begin*, p. 11.
16. Elfi Pallis, "The Likud Party: A Primer," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 1992, p. 45.
17. Begin, *The Revolt*, pp. 36, 46. Also see Tillman, *The United States in the Middle East*, p. 20.
18. Begin, *The Revolt*, pp. xi-xii. Also see Elfi Pallis, "The Likud Party: A Primer," *Journal of Palestine Studies*, Winter 1992, p. 45.
19. Evans and Novak, CNN, Oct. 1, 1995.
20. Menachem Shalev, *Forward*, May 21, 1339.
21. John Kifner, *New York Times*, Nov. 11, 1990.
22. David Hoffman, *Washington Post*, Feb. 28, 1994.
23. Khalid M. Amayreh, "Six Months On," *Middle East International*, Sept. 9, 1994.
24. Halsell, *Prophecy and Politics*, p. 75, provides an excellent analysis of the extremist beliefs of Jabotinsky and his followers and their alliance with American fundamentalist Christians such as Jerry Falwell, leader of the Moral Majority.
25. Clyde Haberman, *New York Times*, Jan. 15, 1994.
26. Glenn Frankel, *Washington Post*, Nov. 6, 1995.

Natural Rebellion

"What country before ever existed a century and a half without a rebellion?... The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure."

— Thomas Jefferson, January 30, 1787

Revisionist Center in Flanders Makes Waves

A Belgian Foundation Battles for Free Speech

For some years now, one of Europe's most important revisionist publishing centers has been the Foundation for Free Historical Research, or *Vrij Historish Onderzoek* (VHO). From the Flemish region of Belgium, the VHO publishes and distributes a range of revisionist materials in Dutch, French, German and English.

Through the efforts above all of Siegfried Verbeke, a printer in his mid-50s, the VHO has developed into an important link in the growing worldwide revisionist community. Several times yearly VHO publishes an informative newsletter, *VHO-Nieuwsbrief*, which often includes material reprinted from this *Journal*. The well-organized VHO catalog includes a range of revisionist titles and periodicals, including such IHR books as *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*, *The Dissolution of Eastern European Jewry*, and *Flashpoint: Kristallnacht 1983*.

VHO has published more than a dozen serious, attractively produced books and booklets in its "Revisionistische Bibliotheek" series, including Dutch language editions of *The Ball Report* (by John Ball), the first and second *Leuchter Report* by American gas chamber specialist Fred Leuchter, and a 170-page booklet on the crematory ovens at Auschwitz and Birkenau by Carlo Mattogno and engineer Franco Deana. VHO is now preparing a French edition of the *Rudolf Report* and further foreign-language editions of works by Carlo Mattogno.

In 1995 VHO published *Auschwitz: Nackte Fakten* ("Auschwitz: Naked Facts"). Subtitled "A Response to Jean-Claude Pressac," this 170-page illustrated German-language paperback book includes scholarly contributions by Prof. Robert Faurisson, Manfred Köhler, Carlo Mattogno and Serge Thion.

As in other countries, the usual forces of "politically correct" bigotry have been trying to shut down this dissident voice. In 1992 four Netherlands organizations — the B'nai B'rith, the Center for Information and Documentation on Israel, the Anne Frank Foundation, and the National Bureau on Combatting Racism — brought a joint civil suit against Verbeke and a colleague for circulating material, including the *Leuchter Report*, that calls into question the officially ordained version of 20th century history. This case received extensive newspaper and television coverage in both Belgium and the Netherlands.

Because publication of such "Holocaust denial" material was quite legal in Belgium at the time, the suit was a bit of legal chicanery. This cross-border lawsuit, apparently the first legal action of its kind, was permitted by new European Community rules. In late 1992 a court ordered VHO director Verbeke to pay 10,000 Dutch guilders (about $6,000) for each revisionist "violation." However, he has refused to pay any fine.

In 1993 the Anne Frank Foundation in the Netherlands and the Anne Frank Fund in Switzerland brought a lawsuit in the Netherlands against Robert Faurisson, Siegfried Verbeke and a VHO colleague for publishing a 125-page booklet critical of the Anne Frank Diary. The defendants were charged with slander, outrage, abuse toward a group and incitement to hatred, discrimination or violence. "It must be remembered," the lawsuit charged, "that for years Anne Frank has been the symbol of the Jews who were victims of the Holocaust. In this way, her name and her diary assume an additional value. Therefore, one has to expect that in this connection oral or written arguments be subjected to a greater prudence, from a social point of view, than Dutch law generally requires." Although the defendants completed their arguments some time ago, the Frank organizations seem afraid to respond in court to Faurisson's arguments, and reluctant to pursue the case further.

In 1994 Verbeke made headlines again for distributing the Dutch-language edition of the *Rudolf Report*. He was falsely chastised as a "neo-Nazi," and an official of a prominent Jewish organization dismissed the *Rudolf Report* as "dangerous anti-Semitic poison."

In 1995 Belgium's parliament approved a new anti-revisionist law, similar to those already in force in France and Austria, making it a crime to dispute the Holocaust story. Anyone who denies, plays down or seeks to justify "the genocide of the German National Socialist regime during the Second World War" may be punished with a fine or a prison term of up to one year.

Defying the new law, Verbeke carries on the struggle. He comments: "When you are living in a country where nearly 40 percent of the productive population is in some way a 'government employee' you will understand everything — that is, nothing turns out well, and we survive by improvisation."

For further information, write:

VHO, Postbus 60, B-2600 Berchem 2, (Flanders) Belgium

Three Stages

"All truth passes through three stages. First, it is ridiculed. Second, it is violently opposed. Third, it is accepted as self-evident."

— Arthur Schopenhauer

Letters

A Tip of the Hat

Today, for the first time, I took a tour of your [internet] website, and was overwhelmed by the wealth of info there. If this is your spare-time project, please accept a tip of the hat from me. Please also be assured that what you've placed there at everyone's disposal is a valuable public service indeed. Thank you very much. Keep on trucking with it.

K.R.
Ste. Therese, Quebec
Canada

Interest in Ukraine

Recently I was just surfing the net and came upon your site, where I found the article "Vinnytsia: The Katyn of Ukraine" [from the Winter 1980 *Journal*]. Because I am of Ukrainian origin, this article was of immediate interest to me. I was totally mesmerized by the content, almost to the point of crying.

I am very interested in finding out more about Ukraine or further historical information about the former Soviet Union from your site or Institute.

J.K.
[by Internet]

Draconian Measures

Thank you very much for providing this important information on historical revisionism [through the Internet]. I have long been frustrated by the sacrosanct "facts" that are continually pounded into our minds through television, film and print.

I do not count myself among those who deny historical atrocities, but I wonder why so much attention and sensationalism has been devoted to the sufferings of this one particular religious-ethnic group, and not others that have suffered as much if not more than Jews.

I recently read a newspaper item about a Japanese magazine [*Marco Polo*] that had been closed down because it featured an article that called the Holocaust a hoax. While I don't believe it was a hoax, I do not approve of such draconian measures to placate a single group, particularly because such tactics reflect the same arrogance and abuse that was inflicted on people in Axis-occupied Europe during World War II.

D.D.
Washington, D.C.

Wrong Journal Priorities?

As it has for years, the *Journal* continues to stick pretty much to its original agenda, which is to refute the Holocaust story. However, you should recognize that for most current and potential *Journal* readers the Holocaust is no longer a red-hot, visceral issue.

What are the red-hot issues? I think they are: (a) the steady destruction of the economic base of ordinary middle class Americans, (b) vast, unrestricted immigration, especially from the Third World, which is irreversibly changing the nation's racial character, and (c), spineless pandering to vocal minorities.

When someone first encounters Holocaust revisionist writings, he no doubt finds them astonishing and even a little breathtaking. ("What, are you seriously trying to tell me that the Nazis didn't kill six million Jews?"). But after six months or a year, you've either convinced him or haven't. And in either case, what more do you then have to say to him?

You should also keep in mind the excruciatingly technical nature of many Holocaust revisionist arguments: traces of this, traces of that, comparison with this, comparisons with that, and so forth. Even though I am a trained engineer, believe me when I tell you that I was barely equal to the demands on my intellect of revisionist arguments. Just imagine how much less attention you can reasonably expect from the typical *Journal* reader.

While your insistence on keeping the *Journal* on a high level is admirable, I am afraid this has hurt you. In your preference for the cerebral to the visceral I fear you have stripped the *Journal* of its power to arouse, excite and enrage.

R.P.
Montville, New Jersey

The *Journal*'s Purpose

What should be the purpose of the Institute for Historical Review and its *Journal*? As I see it, the primary focus should be a serious, factual examination of the Jewish question as it affects historical issues. While this obviously encompasses the Holocaust and Holocaust revisionism, it should also include the Jewish role in World War II, World War I, the Russian revolution, and other critical aspects of 19th and 20th century history.

A related but secondary goal should be to clarify the history of Third Reich Germany and National Socialism. The social and cultural record of the National Socialist regime, Hitler's historical role, and the origins and causes of World War II are endlessly distorted and, as a result, are still not clearly understood today.

I realize that dealing fairly with this chapter of history can be a problem. Hitler and the Third Reich have been so demonized that to deal objectively with them inevitably entails a certain measure of "rehabilitation." The Institute's stated purpose is not to rehabilitate this or that regime, and that is as it should be. In treating these prickly issues, the

main thing should be to deal with the facts truthfully and objectively, and to make sure that the *intent* is not to rehabilitate.

My extensive reading and study over the years has strongly reinforced my conviction that an awareness of the Jewish dimension is essential to an full understanding of human affairs, especially in the West during this century. As numerous prominent Jewish figures have affirmed, the Jewish element is a key factor in many of the problems we experience today.

Scrutinizing entrenched historical myths and uncovering widely-accepted historical lies is obviously no way to win applause from mainstream academic and publishing circles.

While some other periodicals may touch on the Jewish issue, no one dares tackle it with the consistency and seriousness of the IHR *Journal*. What the IHR has already accomplished is magnificent, and it should continue on the same path.

M.B.
Bellevue, Washington

Russian Events Pertinent

I found Ernst Zundel's "Impressions of the New Russia" in the Sept.-Oct. issue very pertinent, for it was interesting to see the nationalist trend discussed there reflected in the recent Russian parliamentary election. The same alien tyranny imposed on the Russian people for 70 years also afflicts us. As Solzhenitsyn said during his years in exile: How the Soviet Union will find its way out of totalitarianism is not the great issue, but rather how the rest of the world will escape the same fate. Your Institute is doing wonderful work, and I hope it provides a shortcut to realization of this by the peoples of the Western world.

A.S.
Queensland, Australia

United in Love and Compassion

... May your soul suffer the same fate as any Nazi who took part in implementing the Final Solution. May God pity you, but never forgive you and your kind for the seeds of hatred which you have planted thereby denying Hitler's victims the eternal rest which they deserve. This is what Wiesel meant by leaving a place for hatred in our lives ...

May humanity some day become so enlightened that it will be able to forgive you for your sins against everything moral and everything crated [sic] by the God Who unites the rest of the world in love and compassion.

Rabbi Matthew Futterman
[by Internet]
Ashkelon, Israel

Fascinated

I have read your flyer and am fascinated by how low you have stooped ... You are a desgrace for the hole human race ...

Gileul Swerdlow
[mailed anonymously from Calif.]

Disturbed Teen

Who are you to judge? Who are you to say that the something so horrible and so devastating? If the holocaust never happened then what happened to the six million jews that are no longer existing or what about my relatives that I never got to know? I don't understand how you can sit there and write these questions about something that did in fact take place...

[signed]
A very disturbed teen
[mailed anonymously from
Woodland Hills, Calif.]

Great Hopes

I am somewhat fed up with statements such as this one in the article about the IHR in the Sept.-Oct. 1995 *Journal* [p. 19]: "Although the Institute does not 'deny the Holocaust,' over the years it has published detailed books and numerous probing essays that call into question aspects of the orthodox Holocaust extermination story."

Why *not* "deny" it? For a long time now sufficient proof has been available to "deny" the existence of even a single homicidal "gas chamber" in a wartime German concentration camp.

The sooner this truth is made available to all people in every country, the better. Then, perhaps, the great personal sacrifices of so many great individuals of character can be made good — in their lifetimes. I have great hopes that the truth will prevail through the Internet.

The sooner the lie of the "greatest crime in history" — that is, about "gas chambers" and six million "murdered" Jews — is laid to rest forever, the sooner the IHR can progress to other urgent historical issues.

H.G.
Herfordshire, England

A Blessing

I am a 70-year-old woman. I fled east Germany in December 1945 and have lived in America since 1948. The outright lies and misinformation about Germany has caused me lots of mental anguish over the years.

Thank you and bless you for your efforts to air the other side.

A. T.
Milbridge, Maine

Intriguing Information

John Weir's review of *The Warburgs* [Sept.-Oct. 1995 issue] was very intriguing. Especially interesting was the information under the subtitle "International Network." Any of the matters dealt with there could be expanded upon.

I am enclosing two checks for the IHR. The $140 check is for my monthly pledge and a *Journal* subscription renewal. The $500 check is a "bonus" for the IHR.

Many thanks for your continued and untiring efforts on behalf of revisionism.

M.P.
Denver, Col.

We welcome letters from readers. We reserve the right to edit for style and space. Write: Editor, P.O. Box 2739, Newport Beach, CA 92659.

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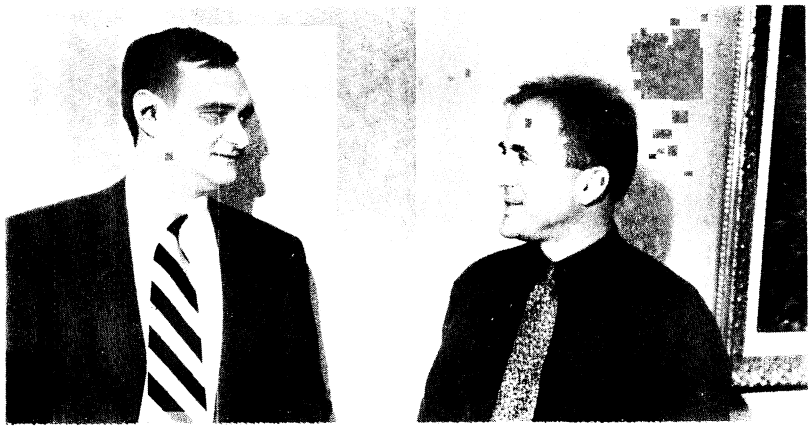

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Shermer, just back from an inspection of the sites of the wartime concentration camps of Auschwitz, Majdanek, Mauthausen and Dachau, cites a "convergence of evidence" in his defense of the Holocaust story.

Weber, Director of the Institute for Historical Review, delivers a powerful summary of the revisionist critique of the Holocaust story, and gives a devastating response to Shermer's arguments.

Shermer, editor-publisher of *Skeptic* magazine, makes one startling concession after another. He acknowledges that numerous Holocaust claims — once "proven" by eyewitnesses and courts — are obviously not true. Shermer concedes, for example, that an execution "gas chamber" at Majdanek — shown to thousands of trusting tourists yearly — is a fraud. (At Nuremberg the Allies "proved" that the Germans murdered *one and half million* people at this one camp.)

This two hour clash — at a special IHR meeting on July 22, 1995 — dramatically gives the lie to the often-repeated claim that the Holocaust story is "undebatable."

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Goebbels: Mastermind of the Third Reich

This stunning new biography made headlines around the world in April when one of America's most prominent publishers — succumbing to what the London *Times* called "prolonged protests from Jewish pressure groups" — broke its contract and halted publication. Before it gave in to a vicious campaign that included death threats, St. Martin's Press was praising *Goebbels* as "**monumental in scope** ... insightful ... draws on masses of previously unpublished materials ... Masterful ... **masterpiece of research as well as a compelling story** ..."

The *New York Times Book Review* calls this a "Rolls Royce" of a book, "filled with costly color photographs" and written in "lively and compelling" prose.

Now you can enjoy your own copy of Irving's brilliant product of seasoned scholarship and gifted writing. You'll treasure this sumptuous 740-page hardcover masterpiece, with more than a hundred photos, many in full color.

Typical of the grudging praise that *Goebbels* and Irving have been receiving in Britain is the commentary of George Stern in the *Literary Review*:

> As with his books on Hitler and Göring, Irving tries to show how events looked to Goebbels. He is the first to use Goebbels' full diary, 75,000 pages, recently found in Moscow. He has interviewed many people, including surviving Nazis, and has used innumerable memoirs and diaries. The result is unique, as though Goebbels had a video recorder on his shoulder... Irving supplies well over a hundred photographs, some as sharp and as colourful as if they were taken yesterday ... Irving's trademark research into original manuscripts is uniquely impressive.

In his *Daily Telegraph* review, British historian John Keegan wrote:

> David Irving knows more than anyone alive about the German side of the Second World War. He discovers archives unknown to official historians and turns their contents into densely footnoted narratives that consistently provoke controversy ... His greatest achievement is *Hitler's War*, which has been described as 'the autobiography the Führer did not write' and is indispensable to anyone seeking to understand the war in the round. Now he has turned his attention to Joseph Goebbels ... The result is a characteristic Irving book: 530 pages of text and 160 pages of relentless references ...

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